



# Drive to 65 Strategic Plan Narrative 2025-2030 Executive Summary

## Strategic Summary

SkillsUSA is the #1 workforce development organization for students.

## Culture Statement

SkillsUSA values a culture that is inclusive, transparent, motivating, progressive and collaborative that allows team members to perform at their highest level.

As SkillsUSA nears its 65<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2030, the organization is both reflecting on its past and shaping its future. Since 1965, SkillsUSA has been serving students preparing for careers in trade, technical and skilled service occupations, all in an effort to ensure America has a skilled workforce. The organization has enjoyed tremendous growth in 2024, now serving 413,038 members and more than 140 occupational programs. While there's data to show that SkillsUSA makes career and technical education (CTE) work better<sup>1</sup>, the growing skills gap and rising income inequality point to a need for fresh ideas and more student participation in career preparation programs.

**#1 Hardest Jobs  
to Fill  
– Skilled Trades<sup>2</sup>**

**81% of  
Manufacturing  
Executives**  
say they are concerned about  
the ability to attract and  
retain a quality workforce<sup>3</sup>

**Two Million  
16-24 Year Olds**  
not enrolled in school,  
don't have diploma<sup>4</sup>

SkillsUSA stands ready to meet that challenge. Throughout the summer and fall of 2023, SkillsUSA gathered input from staff and stakeholders to inform this strategic plan. This document outlines the bold plans and stretch goals SkillsUSA has set to meet the workforce development challenges of today and tomorrow head-on. Needs this big, this important, require bold solutions and steadfast commitment. With the support of our partner network, SkillsUSA will build the future skilled workforce our nation depends on with students who are career-ready, day one.



## Mission:

To empower students to become skilled professionals, career-ready leaders and responsible community members.



## Vision:

To produce the most highly skilled workforce in the world, providing every member the opportunity for career success.

<sup>1</sup> "The SkillsUSA Advantage," SkillsUSA, November 2022.

<sup>2</sup> "Top Jobs in Demand Right Now," Monster.com.

<sup>3</sup> "NAM Outlook Survey Second Quarter 2022," National Association of Manufacturers, June 15, 2022.

<sup>4</sup> "Fast Facts: Dropout Rates," National Center for Education Statistics.

# The Future of Work

## The Skills Gap

American businesses face a labor shortage; there are not enough qualified workers to fill millions of available openings.<sup>5</sup> Moreover, changing national demographics and the persistent underrepresentation of specific groups in critical career pathways compound this threat. Even if there were enough unemployed Americans to fill all of the open positions, job seekers often lack the skills, training and experience required for jobs in specialized career fields. The Society for Human Resource Management says, “The workforce simply does not have enough workers and skilled candidates to fill an ever-increasing number of high-skill jobs.”<sup>6</sup> Along with the need for more workers, there’s also a widening divide between skills employers seek and the training and experience job candidates possess. This divide is often referred to as the “skills gap.”

The education system as a whole — including government agencies and local school systems — has not evolved to meet the capacity challenges of current programs and the needs of emerging career fields, hurting workers, industries and the economy. The pandemic and resulting disruptions in instruction further damaged our education system’s ability to prepare students for careers.<sup>7</sup> Left unchecked, the skills gap could lead to more than 85 million jobs going unfilled by year 2030.<sup>8</sup> As a result, U.S. employers could see about \$8.5 trillion dollars in unrealized annual revenues.<sup>9</sup> CTE presents an opportunity to close the skills gap, improving all students’ college and career readiness, but the number of students attending and completing CTE programs remains challenged. Data suggests that CTE works and it works even better when students are also members of SkillsUSA.<sup>10</sup>



## Workforce Development

Workforce development initiatives encompass a spectrum of programming designed to educate and train individuals to meet current and future industry needs. NAF — a nonprofit focused on preparing students for college, career and future success — claims that workforce development programs have a responsibility to help schools and districts create and sustain strong student pathways to higher wage occupations while equipping them with employability skills and postsecondary credentialing. NAF also points to the need for career pathway workplace experiences that instill in-demand knowledge and skills. One proven strategy for providing students with the opportunities to develop the knowledge and skills is by creating workplace learning experiences (WPLE) which also encompasses work-based learning (WBL). 1) help students build on the knowledge and skills they already have and 2) grow in complexity as students advance in school.<sup>11</sup> As students age, WBL initiatives first target awareness of careers, then exploration of careers, and finally preparation for careers.

<sup>5</sup> “[The Skills Gap, Explained](#),” Business Roundtable.

<sup>6</sup> “[2019 State of the Workforce](#),” Society for Human Resource Management, 2019.

<sup>7</sup> “[Work-Based Learning: Critical Infrastructure for a Future-Ready Workforce](#),” NAF.org, Fall, 2021.

<sup>8</sup> “[NFIB Jobs Report: Open Positions, Labor Quality Continue to Plague Small Businesses](#),” William C. Dunkelberg, National Federation of Independent Business, May 5, 2022.

<sup>9</sup> “[The \\$8.5 Trillion Talent Shortage](#),” Franzino, M., Guarino, A. & Binvel, Y., KornFerry.com.

<sup>10</sup> SkillsUSA, “[The SkillsUSA Advantage](#),” November 2022.

According to the Strada Center for Education Consumer Insights, participation in any type of WBL during undergraduate studies “predicted a significant increase in annual personal income and a higher satisfaction with the career and education experience.”<sup>12</sup> The impact of WBL appears to have a particularly strong impact on disadvantaged youth. The Brookings Metropolitan Policy Program found that disadvantaged youth were positively impacted through beneficial relationships with adults they encountered throughout their WBL experiences. Those positive interactions included exposure to new environments and expectations and opportunities to develop social capital.

Student participation in work-based learning, especially apprenticeships, is growing. In fact, 2021 saw more than 593,000 apprentices, 27,000 registered apprenticeship programs and 96,000 graduates of the registered apprenticeship system. The number of new apprentices grew by 64% from 2012-21, and 14,700 new apprenticeship programs were created from 2016-21.<sup>13</sup>

Despite clear evidence that WBL programming is growing, data to prove the impact of WBL is lacking. Future programming must move beyond mere participation counts to include relationship-rich data, such as how students would characterize their level of career readiness, feelings of belonging in their chosen career field, ability to gain recognition as a legitimate participant in their field of work, and growth of networking opportunities and connections in their career fields.<sup>8</sup>



<sup>11</sup> “[Work-Based Learning Can Advance Equity and Opportunity for America’s Young People](#),” Brookings Metropolitan Policy Institute, November 2020.

<sup>12</sup> “[The Power for Work-Based Learning](#),” Strada Center for Education Consumer Insights, March 16, 2022.

<sup>13</sup> “[FY2021 Data and Statistics](#),” United States Department of Labor.

## Growing from a Position of Strength

SkillsUSA is on strong footing, making this the optimal time to set and strive for big goals.

### SkillsUSA's reach is expanding.

In 2023-24, SkillsUSA started 444 new chapters and celebrated its highest membership on record with 413,038 total members. SkillsUSA chapters thrive in 4,898 schools and 21,196 classrooms across all 50 states, Washington, D.C., and two U.S. territories.

A study of 27,686 CTE students in Fall 2021 indicates that SkillsUSA members are more likely to report greater clarity about their career path compared to non-members of CTSOs.<sup>8</sup>

### SkillsUSA members outperform their peers in CTE.

SkillsUSA members consistently outperform peers not enrolled in a Career and Technical Student Organizations (CTSOs) in seven essential areas:

1. Earning a license or certification related to their field of study
2. Meeting potential employers
3. Being excited about their chosen career
4. Gaining work experience as a student
5. Understanding the work environment
6. Being excited about school
7. Connecting school to the real world

### SkillsUSA owns strong industry support.

More than 850 companies partner with SkillsUSA in accomplishing our mission.

“The thing about SkillsUSA that’s so cool is that it is deliberately focused on celebrating a skill. Three million jobs right now exist in the trades and transportation and commerce. The skills gap is real. Training kids and getting them excited to do the jobs that exist ought to be job one. SkillsUSA does that in a big way.”

— Mike Rowe, mikeroweWORKS Foundation

# Building on Success: 5 Tenets

**ten-et:** principle, belief or doctrine held in common by members of an organization

The Drive to 65 campaign began with a planning process that included a full assessment of SkillsUSA's performance across every business function, as well as data collected from staff, customers and stakeholder groups. These data were instrumental in helping chart our strategic focus for 2025-30, a focus represented by the following five tenets:



## **Build an integrated Digital Ecosystem that will become the interface for all SkillsUSA stakeholders.**

Effective technology solutions deliver efficiency while bringing people

together, and that's exactly the vision SkillsUSA has for our Digital Ecosystem. This system will allow for centralization of all current technology products the organization uses while also improving on the existing user experience by adding single sign-on design, cloud-based infrastructure and networking tools into one homogenous experience. No matter where you go in SkillsUSA's digital ecosystem, you will experience the same brand, the same intuitive design, the same seamless movement from one operation to another. The digital ecosystem will include services and solutions necessary to all other tenets.

sions stronger SkillsUSA participation from across the CTE spectrum at all grade levels, especially in underrepresented communities, as well as outreach to non-traditional learning agencies that are not currently connected to a CTE program.



## **Reimagine Programming for SkillsUSA stakeholders to drive growth.**

SkillsUSA strives to be known as the top workforce development organization in the United States. That goal

brings new clarity and direction to the organization's programming. With this renewed focus, all programming will be re-evaluated, and new programming will be created. Every CTE program in the country will view SkillsUSA as a critical element of their success, and every CTE student in the country will experience SkillsUSA's impact on their career.



## **Grow membership from 400,000 to 1 million members.**

SkillsUSA was founded to serve students, and we have never wavered in that mission. Members are the heart and soul of the organization.

However, SkillsUSA knows it can serve more students and instructors. A research study of CTE students found that membership in SkillsUSA provided several advantages — like connecting school and the real-world, meeting potential employers and gaining real work experience — across all demographic groups. SkillsUSA wants to ensure these advantages for every CTE student. To that end, SkillsUSA envi-



## **Transform NLSC Into CTE Hotspot.**

The National Leadership & Skills Conference (NLSC) serves as an annual workforce development event billed as the "largest showcase of

technical and leadership skills in the country." SkillsUSA envisions a future where NLSC becomes the number one way SkillsUSA members connect with workforce development opportunities, including — but not limited to — the SkillsUSA Championships. Partners will showcase tools and industry trends while connecting directly and more deeply with students. Students participating in local work-based



learning programs will receive recognition for their efforts. Teachers will bring their entire chapters to experience SkillsUSA at a life-changing event where the organization shines brightest. That's the future vision our strategic plan will shape into reality.



### **Increase fundraising to \$25 million annually.**

Industry partnerships have always been the foundation of SkillsUSA's success. The benefits of partnership

run both ways; partners gain access to a skilled workforce through a verified talent pipeline, while SkillsUSA receives financial support and assistance maintaining program integrity through real-world connections. As the organization grows, so must its partnerships and funding. SkillsUSA must build upon our strong existing network of partners and develop deeper relationships with partners that focus on long-term outcomes.





# Tenet 1: Build an Integrated Digital Ecosystem That Will Become the Interface for All SkillsUSA Stakeholders

In today's world, it's clear: Customers and stakeholders experience organizations through technology. They use technology to research an organization; register for, learn through and evaluate programs; pay for services and merchandise ... the list goes on. SkillsUSA is no different; our organization operates platforms and products that allow members and stakeholders to register for events, purchase resources, participate in learning, share data and much more.

And therein lies the problem: multiple complex systems that don't talk to each other. These aging systems have been built as needs arose over the years, and they don't meet the current or future needs of the organization. SkillsUSA envisions a new digital ecosystem that centralizes the functions currently existing on multiple platforms, strengthens the cloud-based computing power of the system and homogenizes the user experience across all functions.

## *So what does this look like?*

Technology is best when it brings people together; That's exactly SkillsUSA's vision for this digital ecosystem, one that will allow for direct member access, provide space for chapters to build and track their programs of work and encourage students to create profiles tracking their experiences in SkillsUSA. Members will gain access to a platform for connecting with each other and with the organization's partners, increasing each member's agency over their SkillsUSA experience and their own career journey. Even better, the system will be used by state associations to register and plan for events. Neville Brody said, "Digital design is like painting, except the paint never dries." Thus, the digital ecosystem will be designed to meet the growing membership of the organization and adapt for new initiatives. The organization will avoid creating one-off solutions by making sure that new additions to the digital ecosystem go through an ideation phase and checklist.

## *What stands in the way of success?*

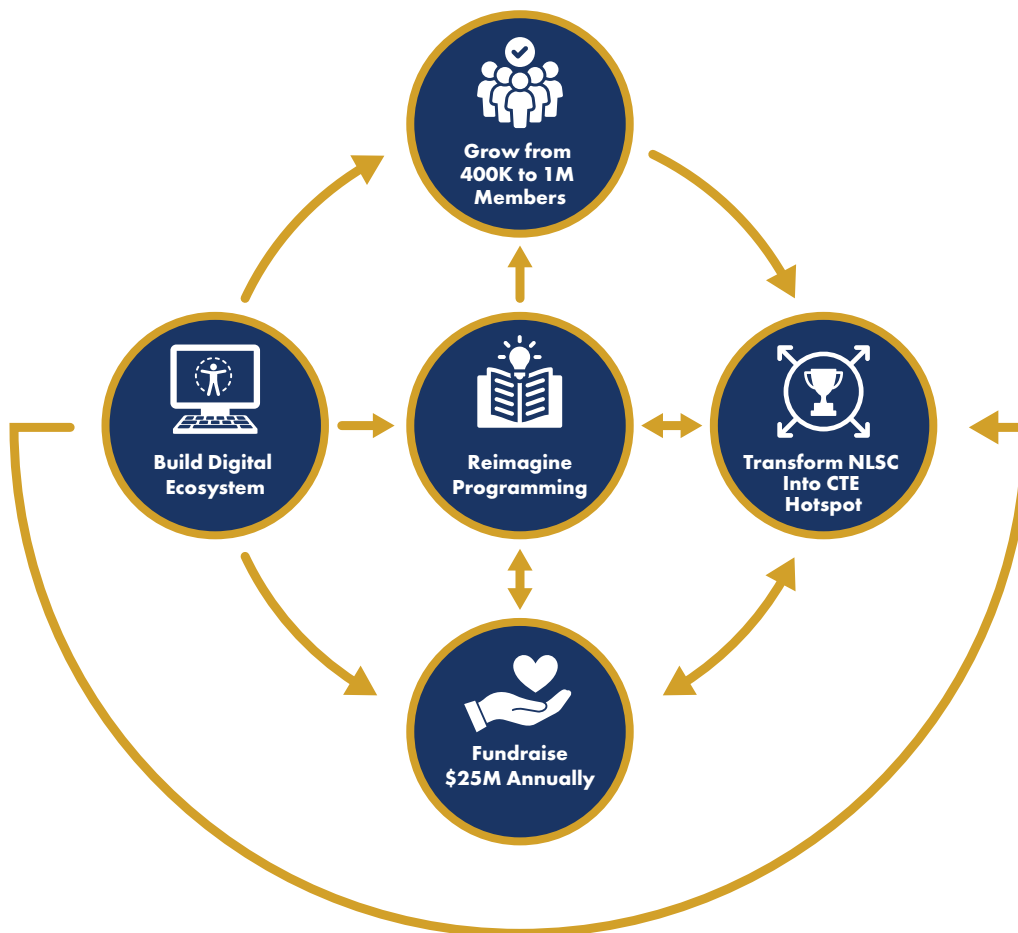
The organization's digital footprint is complex, and it will require complex solutions that feel simple to the user and resolve legalities related to access and data. The planning process must take into consideration key learnings from previous technology projects, as well as guidance from experts in the field.

The stakes are high as SkillsUSA takes on this monumentally important task. The organization must marshal its resources — partners, funding, staffing, state associations, consultants, etc. — to assemble a phased, comprehensive plan with clear timelines and deliverables.

## *What's our plan for success?*

Job one will be completing a needs assessment. SkillsUSA will document the technical abilities of each current product and identify what's critical moving forward. Throughout this process, it will be important to consider both current and future needs as well as cross-compatibility of each deliverable. It will also be critical to engage external partners who have the experience and technical expertise to help advise the process.

The planning and implementation team will determine a phased implementation timeline with deliverables scheduled on a rolling basis with test piloting baked into the plan. This tenet has implications for every other tenet, so it will be important to consider what elements of Tenet 1 will be a predecessor to the others. While planning is in process, leadership and marketing teams will be laser focused on communicating the worthiness of this investment to stakeholders and partners.



**Diagram: Interrelated Tenets**

While many will measure the success of the digital ecosystem by on-time, on-budget delivery of each implementation phase, we must also measure success by the user experience. Our end result must be more than a “beautiful system”; it must be a thriving online community where members and stakeholders interact in learning, e-commerce and workforce development.

“SkillsUSA allows us to network with other members from across the country; to build unexpected bonds; to celebrate our achievements, both individually and as a community.”

— Ambuja Sharma, 2021-22 SkillsUSA national officer





## Tenet 2: Grow membership from 400,000 to 1 million members

SkillsUSA envisions explosive membership growth in CTE programs and in non-traditional audiences. While adding new members is key, SkillsUSA also sees the need for more engaged members who see the value of membership and engage deeply in programming.

### *So what does this look like?*

SkillsUSA will be accessible to a larger share of the CTE audience. In a typical year, 7.3 million secondary students and 2.8 million postsecondary students are enrolled in the types of CTE programs served by SkillsUSA. SkillsUSA envisions a future in which SkillsUSA chapters exist in many more CTE programs, making the SkillsUSA advantage accessible to more students. But SkillsUSA doesn't just want more members; we want engaged members. It is critical that all SkillsUSA members see tangible value in their membership. Enhanced programming will meet students where they are in their career journey and connect them with industry through work-based learning, strengthening students' affinity for SkillsUSA's role in their development and career success.

### *What stands in the way of success?*

SkillsUSA must create a stronger value proposition and programming with tangible benefits members can see and feel. CTE instructors and state directors must also recognize those tangible benefits in order to view the organization as the leading workforce development organization in the country. This mindset shift begins at the national level and must be driven swiftly out and down to all partners, stakeholders and customers.

Additionally, the organization must prepare its infrastructure to serve a larger membership. The registration system will need to be updated to create easier access and to handle the additional traffic that comes with more members. Delivery mechanisms, learning management systems and staffing plans will also need to be addressed to make sure they can provide quality services and programming.

### *What's our plan for success?*

The solution begins within the current CTE system. Expanding to 1 million members by 2030 will require developing a growth strategy for each audience, including all stages of education from elementary to postsecondary. The organization will focus first on the audience it knows best: CTE students. The CTE strategy will also include an intense focus on marginalized populations, as we believe that's where SkillsUSA is perhaps most needed and most likely to have a positive impact on economic mobility. Beyond the CTE strategy, SkillsUSA will develop growth strategies targeted at populations underserved by workforce development programming.

SkillsUSA believes the CTE recruitment strategy may require "boots on the ground" in each region of the country working to support state associations with shared or sold services such as state officer training, event planning, partner development,

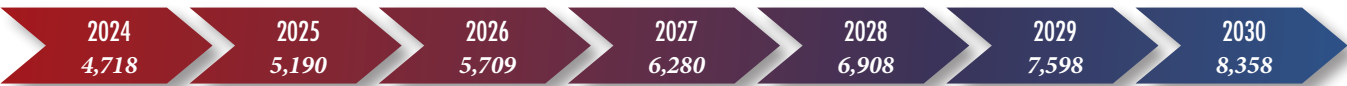
membership and recruitment, Championships and scoring, and marketing and social media. The organization will also assist in training pre-service teachers or instructors seeking licenses. This regionally located team would be charged with targeting schools without SkillsUSA chapters, introducing them to the benefits of membership and showing them how to get started.

No growth strategy would be complete, however, without a thorough look at the organization’s value proposition and current programming (see Tenet 3 for details). If SkillsUSA hopes to elicit an emotional response, a yearning to get involved, the organization must make it crystal clear who we are and how we change lives. We must engage state leaders, partners and instructors with those messages and help them see the tangible value SkillsUSA brings to members. SkillsUSA will identify influencers who can serve as ambassadors at every level of membership and equip them to share on-brand messages through plug-and-play marketing resources they can use in multiple settings.

Finally, as we detailed in Tenet 1, our digital ecosystem must be simplified and strengthened to support this planned growth in membership. SkillsUSA simply cannot grow without an investment in its systems and processes that support membership. Ease of access is a critical element of the Digital Ecosystem plan, as the organization intends to remove barriers to access by creating a system where students can self-register and where there are clearer routes to both starting and joining a chapter with streamlined and simplified registration.

# Membership Growth by the Numbers

## Chapters



## Members



“ Before I joined SkillsUSA, I wasn’t involved in my class at all. I didn’t really talk to anybody. I just did my work and left. And then I joined SkillsUSA, I became an officer in my chapter, and I met a whole bunch of friends. I started to talk to people more. I’m so much more of a leader now. I am a totally different person now since I’ve joined SkillsUSA. I like myself now. It’s like a breath of fresh air. ”

— Jocelyn Hall, Temple Bay Technical High School, Tampa, Fla.





## Tenet 3: Reimagine Programming to Drive Growth

For SkillsUSA to achieve an engaged membership of one million, programming for all customer groups and stakeholders must be reimaged. This will begin with a hard look at the effectiveness of current programming and will expand to developing new programming that meets the core workforce development needs of each audience. Every CTE program in the country should view SkillsUSA as a critical element of their success, and every CTE student in the country should recognize SkillsUSA's unique, positive impact on their career path.

### *So what does this look like?*

SkillsUSA wants to help students experience the job before they get the job. This will require engaging students in each division in workforce development and work-based learning. SkillsUSA will position itself as the LEADER in workforce development, with strong industry partnerships to increase reach and impact. SkillsUSA envisions robust engagement from members, including student members hungry to sign on for programming opportunities.

SkillsUSA also sees opportunities to get in the “educating educators” game, offering occupational licenses and certification programs for instructors as well as engaging with teacher education programs at the collegiate level. Ideally, SkillsUSA will begin to train teachers before they ever get to the classroom.

Finally, SkillsUSA believes state directors need support and resources. Many are overwhelmed by the number of roles they are expected to perform, often leading to burnout or turnover. The organization sees an opportunity to develop resources and support services to lift up this critical stakeholder.

### *What stands in the way of success?*

Historically, SkillsUSA has operated at a distance from its chapters and customers. There have been layers of personnel (instructors, administrators and state staff) between SkillsUSA and its end customer (students). As a result, the organization finds it nearly impossible to market programming directly to its customers or even communicate directly with students who are registered for programming. Being disconnected from customers also impacts the organization's ability to build community from the ground up. The organization must address this to bring programmatic goals to fruition and increase students' feelings of belonging within the organization.

The needs of state associations are varied, and state processes for occupational licensing differ greatly. In response, SkillsUSA has attempted to customize membership models and programming to meet the needs of each association, inadvertently dulling the organization's impact and complicating programming. A reset must focus on getting all states on the same page while using the same systems, processes and programs.

Finally, new CTE teachers are not prepared to advise a SkillsUSA chapter. Teacher prep programs have historically not included training on CTSO advising, even though a survey of teachers found that the two factors most likely to contribute to confidence taking on CTSO advising responsibilities were 1) participation in a class focused on student organizations and 2) serving as co-advisor as part of their student teacher assignment.

## *What's our plan for success?*

It will be important to first simplify the ease of access, enabling SkillsUSA to market and deliver programming directly to students, both online and in person. The Digital Ecosystem planned in Tenet 1 will accomplish this while providing a platform where members and stakeholders can directly connect.

Next, we'll set our sights on programming. Current programming must be reviewed and evaluated for effectiveness, and new programming focused on workforce development and work-based learning will be introduced. Apprenticeships and mentorships will be key to this strategy, as will industry-validated credentialing programs. SkillsUSA will focus on achieving robust adoption from the field, and these new student programming options will lead to new recognition programming to be delivered at state conferences and NLSC.

The organization will focus educator programming primarily on occupational licensing and certifications. In an effort to train teachers before they reach the classroom, SkillsUSA will also engage with teacher education programs. SkillsUSA will shift from a customization model to a standards-based model, standardizing all programming offerings to states. The organization will position itself as a partner to state directors, offering shared or sold services such as state officer training, event planning, partner development, membership and recruitment, Championships and scoring, and marketing and social media. This could take the form of providing back-office services, fractional positions, a "rent-a-director" service or providing a trained team to help manage state events.

Data collection and program evaluation will be baked into all programming, with in-depth and real-time data and reporting on learning, skill development, participation levels and engagement.

“Now is our moment to reimagine our schools as true launching pads for 21st century careers. You are innovators. You are problem-solvers. You are leaders. You are the next generation workforce that will drive America's success in the 21st century.”

— Miguel Cardona, U.S. Secretary of Education,  
speaking at the 2022 NLSC Opening Session

<sup>14</sup> “Model for Preparing Marketing and Business Teachers to Meet the Challenge of CTSO Leadership and Advisement,” Stanislawski, D. & Haltinner, U., Delta Pi Epsilon Journal, v51, n3, p. 166-176, Fall 2009.





## Tenet 4: Transform NLSC Into CTE Hotspot

NLSC currently enjoys strong participation from members and chapters that participate in SkillsUSA Championships programming. While the Championships program has provided a strong foundation for NLSC, SkillsUSA envisions a broader future where members and stakeholders connect on a deeper level, where members build skills and occupational identity, and where members and stakeholders are celebrated for their engagement with SkillsUSA. NLSC would become the number one way SkillsUSA members connect with workforce development opportunities.

### *So what does this look like?*

SkillsUSA will turn NLSC into a “mega event” where students, teachers, administrators, school counselors, partners and CTE-related associations join with industry partners and development boards interested in workforce development. NLSC would become a “can’t-miss” destination event where partner organizations clamor to host complimentary events in conjunction with NLSC. Increased public and national media attention will be focused on the outcomes of the annual gathering.

The SkillsUSA Championships would continue to be an important element of NLSC, but it would be just the tip of the iceberg. Students would view NLSC as THE way to connect with workforce development opportunities, the place students come to showcase their skills, earn certifications and get hired. More hands-on opportunities and industry connections would allow students to explore careers and build occupational identity.

### *What stands in the way of success?*

Perhaps the biggest obstacle to expanding NLSC will be rewiring the current culture of SkillsUSA. Competition is hard-wired into the DNA of the organization, and state directors and instructors may be slow to remove their tight focus on the Championships.

Additionally, logistics are complex, even at the current participation level. Growing participation and programming at NLSC will only increase the logistical complexity of the event. Resources like staff time, volunteers, space on the exhibit hall floor, hotel rooms, meeting rooms, etc. are already stretched thin. New programming and increased participation will require creative solutions to address the resulting strain on resources.

### *What’s our plan for success?*

First, our efforts will focus on strengthening the workforce development and work-based learning elements of NLSC. SkillsUSA will develop programming and certifications to help members strengthen their occupational identity and build leadership and technical skills (see Tenet 3 for details). We’ll celebrate the skilled trades while raising awareness of job opportunities and in-demand skills. All the while, we’ll seek to foster deep connections between students and industry partners.

Next, we'll consider how to drive more members and chapters to NLSC and erase the perception that only competitors travel to the conference. The competitive spirit of SkillsUSA advisors may benefit the organization as we develop campaigns and reward programs to recognize advisors who bring a large percentage of their chapter to NLSC.

Finally, SkillsUSA will consider how to better celebrate and recognize our students, advisors and partners at NLSC. Arena sessions will expand as programming expands to allow for more students, advisors and partners to receive the ultimate recognition on the national stage. Sessions will inspire a sense of pride in the organization and excitement for the future of the skilled trades.

“ It costs a lot of money to hire somebody into a job. There's investment, there's time, and then when you don't get the productivity out of them, they leave your organization or they don't possess the skills that you need. It's very costly to you because you've lost time and money working with that individual. So, organizations like SkillsUSA that are producing some real quality people that are at entry level that can come into our industry, that really saves us a lot of time and a lot of money. ”

— Fred Murphy, Manager of Service Training Development, Cummins



## Tenet 5: Increase Fundraising to \$25 Million Annually

As SkillsUSA positions itself as the leading workforce development organization in the U.S., partnerships will be critical. SkillsUSA must build upon our strong existing network of partners and develop deeper relationships with partners that focus on long-term outcomes.

### *What will this look like?*

The organization can no longer rely solely on membership fees and industry support for funding. Future funding streams will include granting organizations, workforce development agencies and federal agencies. A strong organizational focus on workforce development will serve as the binding agent between programming and funders, creating a pipeline of employment that flows from student experiences to partners and sets the organization up for future funding.

Additionally, bringing in different funding streams will allow SkillsUSA to shift its stance from simply receiving funds to being able to strategically deliver funds, with priority to under-resourced populations, through state and chapter grants and scholarships.

Industry partnerships will be transformed with a long-game approach of multi-year funding. This will enable the organization to move away from a year-to-year program planning model to create long-term plans and collect data to track success. Additionally, industry partners will enjoy more direct access to members, leading industry partners to feel a stronger sense of belonging and affinity to the organization.

### *What stands in the way of success?*

While SkillsUSA enjoys strong support from partners, those relationships are often transactional in nature. The organization has also typically used a year-to-year funding model that prohibits long-range planning. These relationships will need to transform to serve the long-term needs of the organization.

Additionally, data collection has historically been a struggle for SkillsUSA. The organization will need to develop better systems and processes for data collection while also working to understand and overcome legal barriers to data collection, especially those related to minor students.

Finally, SkillsUSA alumni have been a previously under-utilized audience. There is no programming or direct communication with this valuable audience.



# What’s our plan for success?

The cornerstone of this tenet is partner relations. SkillsUSA will assertively drive to a deeper level of engagement with partners. This strategy will include leveraging our board of directors and current industry partners to assist with setting strategy and growing influence among industry partners. SkillsUSA will seek to engender an atmosphere of energy and excitement, with partners vying for position as the top supporter. The organization will create personalized, multi-year funding opportunities by determining each partner’s primary pain points and creating opportunities for collaboration and direct member connection (see Tenets 1 and 3 for details) around those pain points. We will also take time at NLSC to publicly recognize and thank our partners (see Tenet 4 for details).

SkillsUSA recognizes that partnership extends beyond industry. Within the CTE community are myriad partners and national place-based initiatives we should join with to share in research, legislative relations, event planning and other key functions. Furthermore, SkillsUSA will explore funding opportunities from granting organizations, workforce development agencies and federal agencies so that it can, in turn, strategically fund grants to state associations and chapters.

Finally, SkillsUSA will establish a Customer Relations Management (CRM) system that will serve as a source of truth for members and alumni and serve as the foundation of an alumni network with tangible benefits for this valuable audience. Stronger alumni relationships could lead to increased volunteers at events, more brand ambassadors spreading the word about their experiences and new interest in individual giving to the organization.

## Sponsorship Goals by the Numbers



“SkillsUSA students are in demand, and they are better equipped than anyone out there. This organization improves lives and is indeed creating a better world.”

— Jim Lentz, Former CEO, Toyota Motor North America Inc.



## Looking Ahead

As SkillsUSA nears its 65th anniversary, a time of reflection has brought new clarity and energy to the organization's mission and vision. SkillsUSA knows it makes a difference. CTE students who participate in SkillsUSA have a decided advantage over CTE students who do not participate in SkillsUSA. The Drive to 65 campaign represents SkillsUSA's resolve to reach MORE schools and MORE students with MORE work-based learning programming that will empower students to meet their personal and professional goals.

This campaign will be driven by five tenets that provide direction and focus.

1. Build an integrated digital ecosystem that will become the interface for all SkillsUSA stakeholders.
2. Grow membership from 400,000 to 1 million members.
3. Reimagine programming for SkillsUSA stakeholders to drive growth.
4. Transform NLSC into a CTE hotspot.
5. Increase fundraising to \$25,000,000 annually.

None of these tenets stands alone. Across each is a common thread of increasing the organization's direct access to members; simplifying and improving user experiences with all digital interfaces; and connecting members to careers, partners and jobs. Tenet 1 must act as a sort of predecessor, as outcomes of the early phases will impact planning for all other tenets. Tenet 4 will benefit from successful efforts in all other tenets.

SkillsUSA isn't strolling or sauntering toward these big goals. SkillsUSA is pushing...striving...driving. Join us on the Drive to 65!

## Financial Projections

### Membership Dues



### Fundraising

