**DATE:** January 28, 2025

**TO:** TSA Chapter Advisors

**FROM:** Ben Scheierman, TSA State Advisor

**RE:** 2025 TSA State Leadership Conference

**Date, Time, and Place** **-** The Alabama TSA State Leadership Conference will be held at the Montgomery Renaissance Hotel and Convention Center, 201 Tallapoosa Street, Montgomery, Alabama on **April 15-16, 2025**. Registration will be done online as we have done in the past and opens on Saturday, February 1st and **must be completed by** **February 28th, 2025**. Project check in will begin at 7:00 AM on April 15th and most events will start at 12 noon. On Wednesday April 16th most events start at 9:00 AM.

**Who May Attend** **–** Only local chapter members who are affiliated with Alabama and National TSA may register and attend the State Leadership Conference. Nametags which include student numbers will be provided and must be worn throughout both days. These will be checked as members enter each contest/general session/delegate business session. Student ID numbers only will be used for scoring purposes.

**Registration** **-** Each student attending the conference must pay a registration fee of $75 for cost of materials, facilities, medals, awards, state pins, activities, and insurance. **The deadline date for registration is on February 28th, 2025***. There will be no onsite registration***.** The registration fees should be paid in advance and mailed along with a copy of the registration invoice to: Alabama TSA, Room 3307 Gordon Persons Bldg., PO Box 302101, Montgomery, AL 36130-2101. Make your check payable to “**Alabama TSA**.” It is necessary that chapters be pre-registered in keeping with the deadline of **February 28th, 2025,** in order that registration packets and contest materials may be printed and assembled in a timely fashion. To receive a refund, chapters **must** submit a written refund request postmarked before midnight **February 28th, 2025.** After this date no refunds will be made and if you have registered for the conference but do not attend, you are still responsible for paying registration fees. *Do not leave an unfinished registration on the website.* I will force submit any unfinished registrations so that I can proceed with preparations of sign in sheets, score sheets, etc. Make sure you click the *submit* button when you finish your registration. To register go to <https://www.registermychapter.com/tsa/al> You will be using your username (chapter id #) and password that you set for your TSA National membership. Registration will open on Saturday, February 1st, and will close on February 28th, 2025.

**Meals –** Meals are on your own. There are many restaurants and a food truck court that are all with in a two-block radius of the convention center. You can see the available options if you do a Google Maps search of the Convention Center and its surrounding environs.

**Parking –** Self-pay car parking will be available onsite in the hotel parking deck. There is also a self-pay city parking deck just one block North of the Montgomery Convention Center. This deck will not fit a bus. Alabama TSA has arranged for the three streets that surround the MCC to have parking meters covered. This will allow around 12-15 busses to park on the Property. Other parking options adjacent to the property can handle 12-15 more buses. We ***will not*** provide a shuttle service between any bus parking location and the convention center. Chapters will need to utilize a chaperone in a chase car to shuttle drivers back and forth between any remote bus parking area, or make use of a service like a taxi, Uber, or Lyft.

**Voting Delegates** **-** Chapters must assign voting delegate(s) to cast votes for the State Officer election and other association business. The number of voting delegates is determined by the number of paid members within the chapter in the current year. Voting delegates should be registered in competitive events. Delegate stickers will be provided with the correct total number of delegates for your chapter in your registration packet. The stickers are to be affixed to your representative’s name tags prior to being seated as a delegate. Please refer to the constitution with regards to the number of voting delegates allowed per chapter.

It is vital that chapters send their delegates to the “Delegate Business Session” so that a quorum can be established, and the association can conduct their business. This is an important part of TSA members learning and practicing leadership skills.

**Qualifications of State Officer Candidates** **-** Qualifications and applications for Officer Candidates have been posted on <https://www.alabamatsa.rocks> . You are encouraged to review the materials with your candidates before making the decision to run for an office. Please note, we have a constitutional leadership position (MS VP) specifically for a middle school representative on the state officer team. If you are a middle school advisor and have a motivated **seventh grader rising to eighth grade**, please consider running them for this office. They *must* be a middle school student during the year of their service. Deadline for these applications is a postmark of no later than March 14, 2025.

**Dress Code** **-** The State Leadership Conference is an excellent opportunity for members to convey to others the positive, professional image of TSA. TSA official dress is always appropriate and *strongly* encouraged. Appropriate dress includes black shoes, gray slacks, official TSA blue dress shirt, red ties, for males. Black shoes, gray skirts, or dress pants, official TSA blue dress blouse, for females. White dress shirts and blouses are also an option. Jeans, shorts, and T-shirts are not appropriate attire. Night wear (pajamas) should not be worn outside of your hotel room. Shoes should be worn at all times. Appropriate dress is a reflection on your school and of the state association; therefore, it is very important to show that our members are leaders. Please note, official dress for the National TSA Conference allows *only* the official TSA blue dress shirt.

**Code of Conduct** **–** Has been posted on <https://www.alabamatsa.rocks> as the “Alabama TSA Code of Conduct.” The Executive Council encourages you to read these rules to members and chaperones who attend the state meeting. The advisor must distribute copies of the rules to your members and have both member and parent(s) sign the code. The advisor is to retain the copies. **Chapter Advisors will sign a verification form to confirm that all students and parents have signed this form.**

**Medical Release** **–** Has been posted on <https://www>.alabamatsa.rocks as the “Alabama TSA Medical Release”. You must distribute copies of the form to your members and have parent(s)/guardian(s) sign the form. The advisor *must* retain copies in your possession during the conference in case of emergency. **You *must* upload individual .pdf files of the scanned originals prior to arriving at the conference.** **Conference materials will not be distributed to you without these forms being turned in**. **Chapter Advisors will sign a verification form to confirm that all students and parents have signed this form.**

**Media Release** **-** Has been posted on <https://www>.alabamatsa.rocks. It should be covered with members who attend the conference. You must distribute copies of the form to your members and have parent(s)/guardian(s) sign the form. You (advisor) retain the originals. You must upload a .pdf list of any students who did not return the form or who have noted that they wish to not be photographed or filmed. Stickers will be in your registration packet so that the participants name tag can be marked to identify them in any pictures or other media types. **Chapter Advisors will sign a verification form to confirm that all students and parents have signed this form.**

**In Case of Emergency** **–** Parents and students should be given the name and cell phone numbers of the local chapter advisor and all chapter chaperones in attendance.

**Lodging** **–** A reservation form for the Montgomery Renaissance Hotel is posted on <https://www>.alabamatsa.rocks. You (advisor) are responsible for making your own reservations. You should make reservations as early as possible, the deadline for receiving the conference rate is March 15, 2025. Cost this year is $179 per quad occupancy room. We do have a block of 140 guaranteed double rooms currently.

**Recognition** **-** The following awards are presented on stage to individual members, chapters, and advisers during the first general session. Membership Awards, State Officer, Achievement, Advisors of the Year, and Executive Council recognition.

**National Service Project** – Alabama TSA will host an American Cancer Society mixer and state officer candidate meet and greet the evening of April 15th. We will have a DJ that will play some music. We will play some minute to win it type games and give away some swag. We will recognize our chapter who has raised the most money for the ACS with an award plaque. Also, members will have time to meet and mix with the state officer team and state officer candidates. An ACS donations bucket will be used to collect additional donations from the attendees to go towards Alabama TSA's donation to the American Cancer Society!

Once again, this school year, Alabama TSA is asking chapters from across the state to participate in our national service project and help raise funds for the American Cancer Society (ACS) through the TSA/ACS Spirit of Service Awards program. Last year Alabama TSA achieved gold level status by donating $1,333.00. This year we are once again aiming for purple level recognition by raising $2,000 or more.

Bring your chapter donations to the ACS table in the lobby during registration and we will log your donation. As noted above, Alabama will recognize the chapter with the largest donation with a plaque at our ACS mixer.

**Events Lists –** Have been posted on <https://www>.alabamatsa.rocks. Please, remember we do not offer every event that is found in the National TSA Competitive Events Guides. So, make sure you reference these lists and the constraints for numbers of registrants.

**Safety Illustration Contest** – The rules for this contest have not changed in many years and it still is often used as a part of classroom/lab safety instruction. Submissions will be checked in at the state conference and judged onsite.

**State Pin and State T-Shirt** – Deadline is February 28th, 2025. Please, remember to register your students who made submissions so they can be recognized at the awards session.

**Creed Speaking** – The contest rules remain unchanged and are found in the Document Library on the website. Students will report for the writing of the Creed early on April 15th. Please take note of the time and place and have your competitors ready for this early event.

**Tentative Program** – Has been posted on <https://www>.alabamatsa.rocks. This will help you to schedule your arrival times, seed members into contests, plan for dinner on the first evening, etc. The times are set with no anticipated changes after being posted. However, we might experience some room changes so please use the electronic program you will receive access to at registration as your final guide. We will be using a website for our program this year so students and advisors alike will need a device to access the program. This will give us the ability to post finalists, make announcements, and give a greater experience to our students.

**Testing** –We will conduct online testing for those events that require a test. There are 4 events where we need to administer tests and to make things move more quickly at the conference. These are Coding MS, Cybersecurity MS, Forensic Technology MS, and Forensic Science HS. These exams will be given through the AnswerWrite system which is a part of our registration and conference management system. The dates for testing will be given to you in the near future.

Creed written will be done as the first (early) event of the morning on the 15th. It will be the only onsite exam given.

**Keynote Speaker** Our Alabama TSA SLC 2025 keynote speaker is Kent Julian. Kent Julian is a lot of things: crazy-in-love with his wife, proud father of three, Certified Speaking Professional (CSP) with the National Speaker Association, owner of two successful businesses, author, swim coach, fish-taco lover, and proud bald guy. But this wasn’t always the case.

He started out as an “at-risk” kid who couldn’t read in third grade. When he graduated high school, his SAT scores were so low that he had to take Development Studies just to get into college—on probation.

From these humble beginnings, he went on to graduate college cum laude and earned summa cum laude honors with his Master’s degree. After graduation, he led several youth organizations before becoming the executive director of a national youth organization that served approximately 2,000 youth groups across the United States.

After almost 20 years in non-profit work, he did something crazy… he launched his own business. Now he speaks, writes, and consults leaders all over the world. You can find his work online in cool places like Entrepreneur.com, Success.com, HuffingtonPost.com, GoodMenProject.com, and more. He also hosts his own successful podcast called The Live It Forward Show with Kent Julian.

**Portfolios** – Many TSA events require a documentation portfolio. Unless otherwise indicated in an event’s regulations the documentation portfolio must be secured in a *clear front*, report cover, and not a three-ring binder. Report covers can be ordered from the TSA Store online. However, official TSA covers are not required and any color that you might find at an office supply store will suffice.

**Event Modifications** – There are a few events that we have modified for this year. A spreadsheet containing the requirements and modifications will be posted to the website. The modification for most, is that we will not upload events to a website. Instead, those contest submissions are to be brought to the State Leadership Conference and checked in. In several events we are asking students to prepare a printed documentation portfolio and not upload it or present it on a USB device.

**Event Coordinators Form and Professional Development Hours** - It takes a village to run our State Leadership Conference. We need advisors to help us coordinate and manage the competitive events. The following link will take you to a Google form where you can request which events you would like to serve as a coordinator for. We will be offering 4 hours of professional development for each event that you serve as a coordinator or co-coordinator for.

There are a couple of guidelines that we will try to follow as you register as an events coordinator. If you are a middle school advisor, we ask that you serve for high school events and vice versa. This is not possible for every event, but the second guideline would be to register for events that you do not have competitors in.

This is not completely on a first come, first enlisted basis, but seeing that we only need one or two people for each event, the slots will fill quickly, and I will remove those events that fill up from the list as I monitor the form. ***Those that do not sign-up for an event will be assigned to an event.***

<https://forms.gle/J4E6iWz65EMdg3f56>

**Awards Session** – This is an ***important change*** in the way we will conduct the Awards Session from this point forward. The conference ends after the Awards Session and not before. Especially not before the Delegate Business Session. The last two years have been disappointing with the number of chapters that leave the conference early making it difficult to reach a quorum and elect a new slate of officers. This is such an important part of the leadership component of the conference and is an experience that you can’t duplicate in your classroom. To make sure we have a quorum for the Delegate Business Session and an exhibition hall full of cheering TSA members to participate in the Awards Session and the installation of a new officer team, we will no longer mail your awards to you. If you leave before the awards are presented, then any awards that your students might receive will not be sent to you later. All chapters are *strongly* encouraged to remain at the conference until the final gavel strike.

**VEX** – It is important to understand that you must register for our VEX IQ event on both the REC website and then on our TSA registration site. In order to compete you must have a VEX number plate. We are limiting to 36 teams for the IQ event because of our time and space limitations.

The REC website is scheduled to open on February 1st just like our TSA registration.