



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Washington Future Business Leaders of America  
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### Washington FBLA Members Show that We are One Association at National Leadership Conference and Bring Home State Recognition

Atlanta, GA—Over 452 of Washington’s top business education students traveled to Atlanta, Georgia, for the Future Business Leaders of America National Leadership Conference and joined over 13,000 fellow future business leaders from around the world to show that as *One Association for Service, Education, and Progress*, we are striving to develop the next generation of leaders through leadership development and global competition.

Only the top 3% of FBLA’s 250,000 high school and middle school students had the opportunity to attend the National Leadership Conference and compete in the international business leadership competitive events. More than 8,700 High School members from nearly 1,600 high schools and more than 850 Middle School members from more than 250 middle schools competed for cash prizes in more than 100 competitive events over four days. Students also engaged in learning workshops, met with representatives from more than 60 colleges, universities, and employers, and heard from Jordan Davis, an educational speaker and FBLA alumnus, during the opening ceremony.

Washington FBLA was proud to endorse two candidates for national office. **Samara Wijesekera of Holy Names Academy** and **Olivia Hale of Fife High School** both ran for Western Region Vice President and National Parliamentarian, respectively. After a long application and campaign process, **Samara was selected by the membership as the new National Western Region Vice President for the 2023-2024 FBLA membership year.**

“Our student members did an exceptional job in wowing the judges with their keen understanding of areas as diverse as accounting, cyber security, and health care administration,” FBLA President & CEO Alexander T. Graham said. “They headed home with a renewed sense of accomplishment, a robust network of peers from across the country, and connections to colleges and employers as they explore future career opportunities.”



The following Washington FBLA/Chapter Name members took top honors by placing in the top 10 internationally in their events:

- **Bruce, Odenrider, and Wynecoop, Davenport High School**, American Enterprise Project, 9th place
- **Christopherson, Dutka, and Maraju, Fife High School**, American Enterprise Project, 5th place
- **Dave and Trivedi, STEM High School**, Broadcast Journalism, 6th place
- **Harini Thiagarajan, North Creek High School**, Business Calculations, 9th place
- **Ari Lindsay, Komachin Middle School**, Business Etiquette, 10th place
- **Filiz, Kalgi, and Plavsic, International Community School**, Business Plan, 3rd place
- **Kate Schneider, Freeman High School**, Client Service, 9th place
- **Dhanush Eashwar, North Creek High School**, Coding & Programming, 3rd place
- **Emran, Vijayakumar, and Yalla, North Creek High School**, Coding & Programming, 1st place
- **Khatkar and Wakatsuki, Lynden High School**, Community Service Project, 4th place
- **Prabhu and Vuriti, Cedarcrest High School**, Computer Game & Simulation Programming, 9th place
- **Gabrielle Pesito, Hazen High School**, Computer Game & Simulation Programming, 6th place
- **Navarra Chappell, Pe Ell High School**, Database Design & Application, 8th place
- **Samara Wijesekera, Holy Names Academy**, Electronic Career Portfolio, 7th place
- **Sophia Yan, Union High School**, Electronic Career Portfolio, 9th place
- **Rex Torgesen, Manson Secondary School**, Entrepreneurship, 1st place
- **Taylor Galvin, Montesano Junior High School**, Exploring Business Issues, 3rd place
- **Lane Kollin, Komachin Middle School**, Exploring Technology, 8th place
- **Jordan Kaye, Komachin Middle School**, FBLA Concepts, 8th place
- **Everleigh Lawson, Eastmont Junior High**, Financial Literacy, 10th place
- **Rohana Joshi, Cedarcrest High School**, Future Business Leader, 8th place
- **Anderson and Clemmons, Hazen High School**, Graphic Design, 6th place
- **Gabriella Samaniego, Marysville Getchell High School**, Graphic Design, 5th place
- **Samikshaa Prabhu, Woodinville High School**, Health Care Administration, 3rd place



- **Caitlyn Eggert, Woodinville High School**, Hospitality & Event Management, 3rd place
- **Hayden Pappas, Stanwood High School**, Introduction to Business Concepts, 5th place
- **Zander Samuel, North Creek High School**, Introduction to Information Technology, 3rd place
- **Fengyou Liu, Sehome High School**, Introduction to Information Technology, 10th place
- **Emily Millegan, Anacortes High School**, Introduction to Marketing Concepts, 9th place
- **Brooke Berry, Stanwood High School**, Introduction to Public Speaking, 2nd place
- **Andrew Norton, Stanwood High School**, Job Interview, 3rd place
- **Daisy Conway, Mountain View High School-Middle Level**, Learning Strategies, 5th place
- **Mundra, Rana, and Ravi, North Creek High School**, Mobile Application Development, 3rd place
- **Junu, Karthik, and Koppolu, STEM High School**, Mobile Application Development, 7th place
- **Gabriel Barta, Komachin Middle School**, Multimedia & Website Development, 9th place
- **Assonken, Mink, and Woller, Cheney High School**, Network Design, 4th place
- **Carter, Gall, and Lisonbee, Cheney High School**, Network Design, 5th place
- **Ansari, Bansal, and Singh, North Creek High School**, Network Design, 2nd place
- **Denenny, Schneider, and Schneider, Freeman High School**, Partnership with Business Project, 7th place
- **Deife, Iverson, and Nelson, Odessa High School**, Partnership with Business Project, 9th place
- **Vidit Khandelia, STEM High School**, Personal Finance, 6th place
- **Jason Hatfield, Cheney High School**, Political Science, 4th place
- **Jack Schneider, Freeman High School**, Public Speaking, 6th place
- **Cameron Lamotte, Freeman High School**, Publication Design, 6th place
- **Sabrina Neal, Marysville Getchell High School**, Publication Design, 7th place
- **Molly Coonfield, Wenatchee High School**, Sports & Entertainment Management, 10th place
- **Madeline Tsai, STEM High School**, UX Design, 3rd place
- **Rowel Penafior, Komachin Middle School**, Video Game Challenge, 6th place
- **Liliana Solis, Touchet Middle School**, Video Game Challenge, 9th place
- **Aggarwal and Somujayabalan, STEM High School**, Website Design, 2nd place



In addition to those placing in the top ten of their competitive events, several Washington FBLA members and advisers received special recognition. Those include:

**Cindy Chen of STEM High School** was recognized as Washington's Who's Who in FBLA recipient in the conference program; one of FBLA's highest honors.

**Scott Moore of Freeman High School** was recognized as Washington's Outstanding Local Adviser, one of the highest honors an adviser can receive.

**Mike Oechsner, former Executive Director of Washington FBLA**, was inducted into the Adviser Wall of Fame, the most prestigious honor for any FBLA adviser.

**Kevin Connelly** was recognized as Washington's Businessperson of the Year.

**Fife High School** received two (2) \$10,000 Lead4Change grants.

**Komachin Middle School** was recognized as the 3<sup>rd</sup> place top middle school fundraiser for the March of Dimes.

**Komachin Middle School** received 1<sup>st</sup> Place in the Middle School Merit Award.

**Washington State** received 2<sup>nd</sup> Place in the State Middle School Merit Award.

**Samara Wijesekera of Holy Names Academy** was recognized for her service on the Western Region Council as Communications Director.

**Samantha Venegas of Elma High School** was recognized as a Western Region Pen Pals program participant.

The winners of these highly competitive and prestigious awards were selected from among FBLA's membership of over 250,000 students and advisers and represent some of the best and brightest of today's youth.

Washington FBLA-PBL, Inc., is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) education association endorsed by the U.S. Department of Education and Washington's Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction as an integral part of the business and education curriculum. In over 70 years of service to 15 million alumni FBLA is the place where the world's business finds its leaders. FBLA's mission is to inspire and prepare students to become community-minded business leaders in a global society through relevant career preparation and leadership experiences. For more information, visit [WEBSITE].

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