

Hidden Valley FBLA chapter earns national recognition

By Linsay Cathey
of the Daily Courier

The Hidden Valley Future Business Leaders of America chapter ranks as one of the best in the nation.

The 26-member team returned home earlier this week from the FBLA National Leadership Conference in Anaheim, Calif., where several students earned top awards.

Mary Ann Ellis, Jordan Gilbert and Rachel Loughran, all students on the American Enterprise Project team, earned gold with their Project BOND, which stands for Budget Of a New Day. During this project, the students visited local elementary schools and taught students about the importance of money management and budgeting “wants vs. needs.”

The HVHS Community Service Project Team, led by Morgan Hansen, Rilynn Hansen and Cedar Wilkening, was named “Best in the Nation” with its Josephine County Foundation project.

The students successfully created a student-led nonprofit foundation that has a board made up of students from six area high schools. The foundation has already secured funding of \$200,000 for scholarships over the next 10 years, funded smaller projects locally, and organized and hosted a free full-service vision clinic. The students stay involved by marketing memberships, donations and providing additional support for the foundation.



Teachers Chris Pendleton and Dale Fisher, far left and far right, pose with Cedar Wilkening, Rilynn Hansen, and Morgan Hansen, all students on the Community Service Project team who started the Josephine County Foundation project and earned “Best in the Nation” at the Future Business Leaders of America national conference in Anaheim, Calif., last week.

Both the BOND project and the foundation project included a 30-page written report and seven minute speech, which was judged at the conference.

This is the second National championship for Morgan Hansen, Rilynn Hansen and Wilkening. Morgan and Rilynn paired to win the National title for Business Financial Plan in 2012 and Wilkening was part of the national winning American Enterprise Project team in 2011.

Bailey McGrill, Haley Musack and Lilli Stephens became the first all-freshman team to win a national award for Hidden Valley with their eighth place finish in Business Presentation.

The team topped some of the best speakers in the nation at all grade levels.

The local FBLA chapter was the top award winner among Oregon Chapters, bringing home two of Oregon’s four titles. Centennial High School of Gresham and Tualatin High School — both in the Portland metro area — earned the other two.

The national competition, with over 9,000 in attendance, brings together the best students from around the nation to compete in more than 60 events. Hidden Valley, with a population of 680 students, competed head-to-head with schools more than five times its size.

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Reach reporter Linsay Cathey at 541-474-3722 or linsaycathey@thedailycourier.com