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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## **Grand Island to host 2020 SkillsUSA Nebraska Leadership and Skills Conference**

On April 2nd-4th, more than 1,800 students from across the state will converge in Grand Island at the Heartland Events Center and Fonner Park to compete in the 2020 SkillsUSA Nebraska Championships.

SkillsUSA is a partnership of students, teachers and industry working together to ensure America has a skilled workforce. The organization serves middle school, high school and college students in programs preparing them for technical, skilled and service careers. It was originally founded as Vocational Industrial Clubs of America in 1965. In 2004, the name changed to SkillsUSA. Since 1965, the organization has served more than 13.5 million members. SkillsUSA enhances the lives and careers of students, instructors and industry representatives as they strive to be champions at work.

Students compete in over 100 career and technical competitions including architecture & construction, arts, audio/video technology, business management & administration, education, health science, public safety, hospitality & tourism, leadership, manufacturing, science, technology, engineering & math, information technology, transportation and more! Each year the state competition is a showcase of students who have worked throughout the year improving their skills and exploring their future careers in the technical trades.

The state championships showcase the best career and technical students in Nebraska. All contests run with the help of industry, trade associations and labor organizations, and test competencies set by national industry standards. All competitions offer free public viewing.

Top students earn prizes and scholarships from community colleges, businesses and industry. First-place winners go on to the national championships in Louisville, Kentucky, held on June 22-26, 2020, for the 56th annual National Leadership and Skills Conference. More than 15,000 people — including students, teachers and business partners — are expected to participate in the week-long event.

The skills gap in the United States is a growing crisis for our nation. Hundreds of thousands of the highly skilled technical jobs our economy increasingly depends on are available right now, and industry is desperate to fill them. Unfortunately, workers equipped with the necessary skills are in short supply. SkillsUSA is a talent pipeline and a solution provider considered vital to solving America's growing skills gap. SkillsUSA's framework complements technical skill training with instruction in the employability skills that make a well-rounded worker and citizen. Our program emphasizes high ethical standards, superior work skills, lifelong education and pride.

Numerous Grand Island residents have already volunteered for the SkillsUSA Nebraska Championships to coordinate and judge the various student competitions and assist with the overall organization of the conference. If you are available and would like to volunteer, contact Cori at the SkillsUSA office listed below.

For more information, visit [skillsusanebraska.org](http://skillsusanebraska.org) or contact Greg Stahr, SkillsUSA Nebraska State Advisor, 402-471-0898, [greg.stahr@nebraska.gov](mailto:greg.stahr@nebraska.gov).