

What: FCCLA National Leadership Conference

Where: Walter E. Washington Convention Center

(801 Allen Y. Lew Place NW, Washington, DC 20001)

When: Monday, July 5 – Friday, July 10, 2026

The Clarinda FCCLA (Family, Community, Career Leaders of America) chapter has four students that have earned their way to the National FCCLA conference to compete. Nicole Thummel the Clarinda FCCLA advisor will be taking the four girls to the national conference this summer. This year Bailey Neal, Taylor King, Kelsey Stephens, and Lexi Clark have earned the privilege to compete in STAR (Students Taking Action with Recognition) Events, a national competition held by FCCLA. They competed at the state of Iowa FCCLA conference and won first place in their respective categories (Professional Presentation, and Kelsey & Lexi competed in an online STAR event which went through preliminary rounds at Nationals, and they are in the Top 20 in the nation), which earned them the right to compete at the National FCCLA conference. The girls want to attend nationals to showcase their hard-work and to represent the state of Iowa, the Clarinda community, and their fellow FCCLA members. This year the national competition will be held in Washington D.C., from July 5th through July 9th. The ladies will have the opportunity to meet over 8,000 students from across the United States, compete against other FCCLA members, attend workshops, listen to speakers, tour our nation's capital, and develop leadership skills.

Itinerary rough draft:

Monday, July 6th – Travel Day (flight) and conference check-in & General Session.

The national conference will be held July 6-10, however, due to the girls competing we MUST arrive by July 6th. The Star Event guidelines state that we must be checked into the conference registration table NO LATER than 6PM on July 6th. – This will allow us time to make it to Washington D.C. without being rushed or if there are flight delays.

- General Session – 6PM- 9PM (doors open at 5:15PM), this session will include Welcome, Award presentations, and Keynote Speaker.
- State Meetings – 3:00 PM – 5:15 PM

KEYNOTE SPEAKER: MAGIE COOK

Award-winning keynote speaker Dr. Magie Cook energizes audiences to face challenges head-on to unlock hidden opportunities.

As a successful Latina businesswoman, Magie was the CEO and founder of Maggie's All-Natural Fresh Salsa's & Dips, a company that grew into a multi-million-dollar business within 4 years and distributed products across 38 states to major supermarkets such as Wal-Mart, Sam's Club, Whole Foods, and many more.

Her personal journey to success didn't come easy. From her childhood and throughout her young adulthood, Magie had to overcome several economic and business setbacks that forced her to get resourceful and look for other paths to reach her goals.

Tuesday, July 7th – STAR Event Competitions: Site Seeing, State Meetings, RED Talks

On July 7th, FCCLA Chapter Website (Lexi & Kelsey) and Professional Presentation (Taylor & Bailey) will be competing at some point during the day. The Expo will be taking place from 8AM -4PM, and RED talks, FCCLA Store, and Youth Workshops will run from 8AM to 4PM. The conference center will be holding an EXPO (free stuff!) that students will be able to walk through and collect free items as well as talk to colleges. Workshops and RED talks will also be happening throughout the day. RED Talks are 15-minute sessions led by FCCLA members, advisers, exhibitors and partners – topics will vary. State Meetings will also be from 5PM – 5:45PM. The evening is open for Dinner and Sightseeing.

Wednesday, July 8th – Star Event Competition, Advisor Professional Development, RED Talks, EXPO, Youth Workshops, Site-seeing/tours

Wednesday things will start to pick up. The business meeting starts at 10AM. The Expo will be taking place from 8AM -4PM, and RED talks, FCCLA Store, and Youth Workshops will run from 8AM to 4PM. Member recognition session will start around 5:30pm-9:00PM and will be celebrating skill demonstrations, knowledge bowl finals, and recognize members going into FCS education to become an FCS teacher! Finally, the day is over around 7 PM with the ability to site-see and tour local attractions.

Thursday, July 9th – Fun Day (Rally on the Hill and Sightseeing!)

This will be the day that we get to explore and prior to going we will discuss what the day will look like. The evening (6PM-9PM) general session: adviser recognition, fashion show, & knowledge bowl finals. We will be going to Smithsonian museums and possibly the National Zoo and all are free to visit.

Friday, July 10th – Travel Day

The last day of conference is July 10th and the last event ends at 10:30 PM, however, we will leave for the hotel by 1 PM. The final meeting is just for awards. Finalist Report to holding room at 8AM, and STAR Event Finalist Session starts at 9AM. State STAR Events Recognition 12-2:30PM, we may not make this meeting, and if that is the case our state director will bring back your awards. Also, the 4:55 PM flight is the only nonstop flight back to Omaha!

Trip Costs & Fundraising

This is a once in a lifetime trip... the only drawback is trips are EXPENSIVE! After conversations with the Clarinda Community School District administrators, it has been determined that National events are above and beyond the financial support of the school district. As a result, the Clarinda FCCLA chapter may use their own earned funds to help pay for the national trip. Clarinda FCCLA chapter does have funds to help support our FCCLA members in attending the national conference however, it is not enough and we will need to fundraise. Below are a couple of fundraisers that I feel will be easy for the girls to complete while giving us the biggest bang for our time/time constraints.

FCCLA National Leadership Conference Costs

	Costs: (Individual Costs)	Group Costs:
Conference Registration	\$170 (x4)	\$1010.00
STAR Event Fee	\$55 (x2)	
Online STAR Event Fee	\$80 (x2)	
Hotel	\$259.00 (x4 nights) +Tax 15.95%	\$ 1,201.24 (pd by community member – 1 room for students)
Flights	\$759.75 (x4) (including taxes/fees)	\$3,039
Ground Transportation	\$20-\$40	\$100-\$200
Site-Seeing: Night Tour	\$49-\$79	\$395
Meals	Up to \$300	\$1,500
Total Costs:	\$1,836.31 Per Person	\$7, 345.24

Each girl needs to fundraise at least \$1,600. (to be safe!)

Generous Financial Donations:

- A community member has generously donated the cost of the FCCLA members hotel rooms during their stay in Washington D.C.- \$1,201.24!
- **Mrs. Thummel’s conference registration, travel (flight), and hotel expenses are not included; however, RPP funds could be used to help cover the flights and registration costs. Total cost: \$1,979.04**

Fundraising Ideas (fast and efficient)

- 1. Community business sponsorships (reach out to local banks and businesses asking for a donation) – Wrote a sponsorship letter and the girls will deliver/talk to the businesses in person.**
- 2. Calendar Sponsorship – Students will ask for people to sponsor a day in May. The sponsor will pay the day (example May 5th = \$5) then we will post on social media as a thank you and highlight their sponsorship. – Girls are currently completing.**

3. Can Redemption: Girls and Mrs. Thummel are currently collecting pop cans to redeem through the FCCLA Droppett account the school has set up for us.
 4. Popcorn Sales – Poppin Popcorn LLC. – Gives back 60% of profit to the organization.
- All money made through fundraising will then be applied to the girl's balance total - \$1,600 per girl x 4 = \$6,400. Whatever is left by June 14th will be divided among the girls to be paid in full.