

Overcoming obstacles

Northview, Sullivan students honored at JAG State Career Development Conference

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Cadie Honaker of Sullivan High School finished second in the writing skills competition and Parker Timberman of Northview High was an Outstanding Senior Honorable Mention at the Jobs for America's Graduates program's 10th annual State Career Development Conference that was held recently in Indianapolis.

The JAG program helps high school students with barriers to success earn their diploma and learn valuable employability skills. More than 160 students competed in the state finals.

Students from all over the state competed in 10 different categories that challenged their critical thinking skills, entrepreneurial savvy, public speaking and writing comprehension. More than 1,000 JAG Indiana students initially competed in the regional events before the field was narrowed to 160 with the capstone achievement being the Outstanding Senior recognition.

The criteria for Outstanding Senior included academic performance, participation in JAG Career Association activities, success in and out of the JAG classroom

and a demonstration of perseverance through personal and academic challenges. Sidney Shoaf of Pendleton Heights High School was named the 2018 JAG Indiana Outstanding Senior, followed by runnerup Ilesha Young of Snider High School in Fort Wayne and Te'Airra Spencer of Calumet New Tech High School, who placed third.

"It's always gratifying to see Indiana's youth accomplishing such outstanding tasks and demonstrating their skills and abilities," said Indiana Gov. Eric J. Holcomb, who spoke at the event and is serving as the Chair of the

JAG National Board. “The JAG Indiana program continues to inspire our state’s students, and today’s event was a great example of the bright future these students have.”

Three awards also were presented to the school Career Association, which is a student-led service learning component of the JAG program, in the categories of marketing brochure, which promotes the career association and recruits new members, service learning blog that showcased bullying prevention initiatives by the JAG Career Association and a two-minute commercial to promote JAG Indiana to their peers.

“The students competing at the JAG career development conference demonstrated the variety

of skills and range of ability that will prepare them for success as they continue their education and pursue career opportunities,” said Fred Payne, Commissioner of the Indiana Department of Workforce Development. “I was pleased to see the efforts that all students put into this competition, and their performance was a clear indication of why JAG Indiana has become the nation’s largest and most successful program in the JAG national network.”

Beginning with just 12 schools in 2006, JAG Indiana has grown to the largest affiliate in the national network with more than 137 programs statewide. Since its inception, more than 18,000 Hoosiers have participated in JAG with 95 percent of these students graduating from high

school. JAG students receive career preparation and life skills training while in school and one year of adult mentoring after graduation to ensure their continued success. Many students choose to continue their education after high school. In fact, JAG students secured more than \$26 million in scholarships for the class of 2017.

Visit jagindiana.org to learn more about the JAG Indiana program.