

The CTE Spotlight

Highlighting Career Technical Education in Cocke County Schools

Building Opportunities:

Sonoco's Thanksgiving Donation Supports CTE Programs

As the season for giving thanks unfolded, Cocke County Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs were blessed to receive a \$2,500 donation from **Newport Sonoco Converted Paper**. Then, **Sonoco Papermill** matched that amount, so a **total of \$5,000** was given to support student participation in *SkillsUSA* events. The funds were divided, with \$3,000 benefiting CCHS participating programs and \$2,000 aiding students at Cosby High School.

The donation, delivered on November 14, 2024, by **Bryna Gossett and Kathy Bromley** from Sonoco's HR department, underscores the companies' dedication to education and workforce development. These funds will empower CTE students to enhance their skills and explore leadership opportunities through *SkillsUSA*, a Career Technical Student Organization (CTSO).

Cosby High School's Industrial Maintenance CTE Teacher, Mr. Travis Sane, expressed his gratitude by saying, "This means a lot to our students. It's not just about the money—it's about the opportunities it opens up."

The Cocke County Schools community is deeply thankful for **Newport Sonoco Converted Paper** and **Sonoco Papermill's** generosity, which is helping prepare students for bright futures in the workforce. Their support not only provides valuable resources but also demonstrates a commitment to investing in the next generation. By fostering these partnerships, the district continues to bridge the gap between education and industry, equipping students with the skills and confidence they need to succeed.

Pictured below left, Sonoco reps present the donation to Cosby High School's Industrial Maintenance teacher and students in the company of Principal, Shawna Murrell, and CTE Director, Eric Ellison. The picture to the right shows Mrs. Gossett and Mrs. Bromley handing CCHS's Auto Collision Repair CTE Teacher, Mr. Jason Smith, the donation with other CTE teachers and administration standing proudly in front of their *SkillsUSA* banner.



Learning the
LINGO

<-- Remember, this icon notes a
CTE term throughout the newsletter.

(Logo)

<-- This one will highlight
a CTE Industry Partner.

CTE Students **NATIONALLY** Recognized!

Cocke County CTE Student Wins **National FFA** Title



Above Nate is pictured with CCHS FFA Chapter sponsor and CTE Horticulture Science teacher, Ms. Chelsay Burns, as he accepts his award.

Nate Mason, a junior at Cocke County High School, has made history as the **FIRST** and **ONLY** student to be recognized as a FFA **NATIONAL** champion within our district to date.

Mason won in the Animal Systems Division 3 category at the National FFA Agriscience Fair during the 97th National FFA Convention in Indianapolis, Indiana this October. His project, based on research conducted at his family's poultry operation, examined how light, temperature, and humidity affect chicken growth rates. After earning top honors at the state level, Mason advanced to nationals, where he submitted a manuscript and participated in interviews with judges to secure his win.

When asked about this undertaking, and his ultimate win, Nate stated, "My agriscience fair research has been an incredible opportunity to showcase who I am and what I'm passionate about. In today's world, countless opportunities are available, but it's up to you to seize them and make the most of what you're given. Sometimes it's scary to step out of your comfort zone, but you'll never know what can come out of it."

Congratulations to Nate and the entire CCHS FFA chapter for their outstanding accomplishments! Read more about Nate's win [HERE](#) online covered by our local newspaper, [The Newport Plain Talk](#).

JAG Student Chosen to Lay Wreath at Tomb of Unknown Soldier



Gracelyn Davis, a CCHS senior in our CTE Jobs for America's Graduates (JAG) program, was selected as one of four students from around the nation to lay a wreath at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier during the National JAG Leadership Conference in Washington, D.C., held December 4-8, 2024. Gracelyn earned this prestigious honor by composing an essay as to why she wanted to participate in the ceremony. In her essay, she not only demonstrated her understanding of service, sacrifice, and patriotism, but she dedicated a large portion of it to her grandfather, a Vietnam War veteran.

The Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, located in Arlington National Cemetery, serves as a memorial to unidentified American service members who gave their lives in war. Guarded 24/7 by the elite soldiers of the 3rd U.S. Infantry Regiment, known as "The Old Guard," the site stands as a powerful symbol of honor and respect.

Being selected for the wreath-laying ceremony was a once-in-a-lifetime moment, and Gracelyn shared her thoughts on the experience, saying, "Standing in front of the Tomb, knowing it represents so many who gave everything for our country, was overwhelming. It was an incredible honor to be part of something so meaningful." (To see/read more, click below:)



These pics show Gracelyn (pictured front in the white shirt) during the recessional after participating in the wreath ceremony at the Tomb. In the pic to the right, the wreath can be seen in front of the Tomb as a member of "The Old Guard" escorts the students away.

Along with Gracelyn, four other JAG students attended the conference this past December under the guidance of JAG Specialist, Ms. Julie Barcikowski. *More details and pictures can be seen on Page 11.*

Want to read Gracelyn's essay? Click [HERE](#).

SPECIAL SPOTLIGHTS

Giving During The Gifting Season

As the holiday season approached, the spirit of giving was in full swing within our district. Whether giving TIME, RECOGNITION, or CARE, students across Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs have been making an impact in meaningful ways.

Here are three outstanding examples of generosity in action:

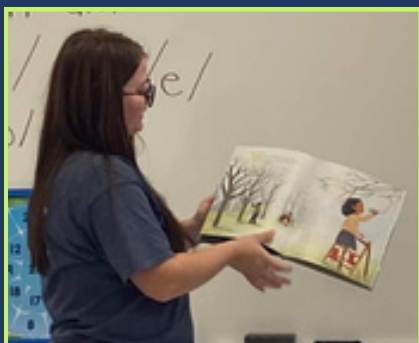
Giving TIME:

CHS Seniors Share the Gift of Agriculture

During Tennessee's Agriculture Literacy Week, held from November 17-23, 2024, senior members of Cosby High School FFA dedicated their time to reading to various K-3rd grade students. Their efforts not only helped promote agricultural education, but also fostered a love for reading.

Kara Shults is pictured below reading *My Grandpa, My Tree, and Me* by Roxanne Troup, demonstrating the importance of taking time to educate and inspire future generations.

By sharing their knowledge and passion, these FFA seniors are planting seeds of curiosity and understanding about agriculture in younger students, proving that giving **TIME** can be just as valuable as any gift.



Read more about Ag Literacy Week and the students who participated on Page 8. Also, check out details about their Thanksgiving Box Drive! CHS FFA sponsor Mrs. Jennifer Noe couldn't be more proud!

Giving RECOGNITION:

CCHS Machining Students Craft a Special Tribute



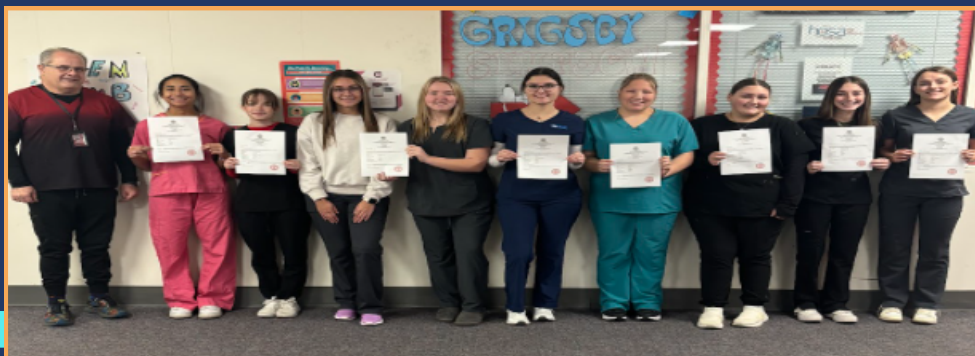
RECOGNITION is a meaningful way to show appreciation, and Justin Ramsey and Aydyn Walker, students in Mr. Chad Webb's Machining Technology class, embodied this sentiment by crafting a special plaque commemorating the 3rd Annual Soup Cook-off at CCHS.

The students crafted the plaque using a Haas CNC Machining Center. It was presented to CCHS Agriculture teachers (and Soup Cook-off hosts) Mrs. Ariel Perry and Ms. Chelsay Burns the day of the event.

The thoughtful gesture by Justin and Aydyn is a testament to how CTE programs can collaborate, demonstrating the power of cross-disciplinary skills and teamwork. (Read more about the cook-off on Page 9.)

Giving CARE: Nursing Clinicals Students Achieve CNA Certification

Perhaps the greatest gift of all is the ability to **CARE** for others. Mr. Grigsby, Nursing Clinicals teacher, is proud to announce that all of the Fall '24 Nursing students successfully passed their CNA testing, earning their Certified Nursing Assistant credentials. Now, they are equipped to provide compassionate and skilled care to those in need. Their dedication to their training and their future patients reflects the heart of the healthcare profession—giving care selflessly to improve the lives of others.



Fall '24 Nursing Clinicals Students:

From CCHS:

Emma Arrowood, Abigail Belcher, Kyndal Hopkins, Rori Jones, Callie Styles, Riley Thomas, Aaliyah Timmons, and Jocelyn Waits

From Cosby HS:

Alessia Mahony and Tabaya Spencer

SPECIAL SPOTLIGHTS

Hands-on & Hearts In: Meet Our Newest CTE Teachers

Welcome Ms. Mahala Owen to Cosby High School's CTE Hospitality & Tourism POS!

Cosby High School's Hospitality & Tourism program has a new face this year, and it's one that might be familiar to the community! **Ms. Mahala Owen**, a Hartford, TN native and Cosby High School alumna, joined the CTE faculty at the end of October as an interim teacher. She steps into the role while Mrs. Michelle Lane temporarily assists with local Hurricane Helene relief efforts.

Although this is Ms. Owen's first year in the classroom as a teacher, she brings a wealth of knowledge and global experience to her students. She earned her Bachelor's Degree in Interior Design from Middle Tennessee State University, along with minors in Spanish and Health & Human Performance. Additionally, she is certified to teach English as a foreign language—an achievement that aligns perfectly with her passion for encouraging students to explore the world beyond Cosby.

And when she says "explore the world," she means it! Ms. Owen has traveled to an impressive 23 different countries, gaining firsthand experiences in diverse cultures, hospitality industries, and global perspectives. She hopes to inspire her students to see the vast opportunities available to them in the world of Hospitality & Tourism, whether in their own backyard or across the globe.

Cosby High School is excited to welcome Ms. Owen and looks forward to the enthusiasm and fresh perspective she brings to the classroom.

POS

This stands for "**Program of Study**". A POS is a group of courses within the same career pathway. Each POS consists of a minimum of THREE courses that are taken in a specific order. Students must pass them (in order) to complete a program. A student is required to complete a POS in order to graduate.

Introducing the New CTE Middle School Teachers at Cocke County's Innovation Center

Exciting changes took place in Cocke County last semester as the staff of the new CTE Middle School prepared to welcome 7th and 8th graders after Christmas Break! Housed within the county's new Innovation Center, this program not only aims to provide hands-on, career-focused learning to younger students—setting them on a path toward future success—but also to assist in their transition to high school.

During the second nine weeks (or Quarter 2), the new CTE Middle School teachers worked diligently—developing unique curriculum, researching and ordering materials, and setting up their state-of-the-art classrooms.

We are excited to introduce these dedicated CTE educators who will be leading this endeavor on the following page. (Pictured right- in the front, Ms. Brilee Culbert, new Introduction to Agriculture teacher, gets to work unpacking one of many boxes.

STEM teachers, Barker & Cody, are also seen in back. Pictures below illustrate their hard work and progress along the way.)



Meet Dr. Alisha Anderson: Inspiring Future Healthcare Professionals



CTE Middle School is proud to welcome **Dr. Alisha Anderson** as our new **Introduction to Health Science** teacher for 7th and 8th grade (*pictured on left*). With a passion for guiding students toward their futures in healthcare, Dr. Anderson brings years of experience in both secondary and higher education.

Originally from West Virginia, Dr. Anderson has taught Anatomy & Physiology at Bluefield State University and Mercer County, Tennessee, since 2010, as well as Biology at Sequoyah High School in Monroe County. She holds a Doctor of Chiropractic degree, a BS in Anatomy, and an M.Ed. with a concentration in Biology from institutions including Marshall University, Parker University, and Carlow University.

Now living in West Knoxville with her husband of 29 years, Dr. Anderson cherishes time with her family, especially enjoying sunsets on Douglas Lake. She hopes her students leave her class understanding that career exploration is part of the journey and that every step they take brings them closer to their goals.

Her favorite teaching moments come when students realize how much they've learned and gain confidence in their abilities. With an inspiring motto— **"Don't just suck air, add value"**— Dr. Anderson is excited to help her students discover their potential in the world of health science!

Meet Brilee Culbert: Cultivating Knowledge as our new Middle School AG teacher

Let's extend a warm welcome to **Ms. Brilee Culbert**, the new Middle School **Agriculture** teacher! (*Pictured below.*) A native of Elizabethton, TN, Ms. Culbert grew up on a small farm raising commercial dairy goats, which inspired her passion for agriculture and education. She holds an A.S. in Agriculture from Walters State Community College and recently completed her B.S. in Agriculture Science with a concentration in Education at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville.

Ms. Culbert is eager to share her love for agriculture with her 7-8th graders, especially through hands-on activities like her class "Shark Tank" Agribusiness project. She hopes to instill in her students a strong appreciation for the agricultural industry and its impact on daily life. When she's not in the classroom, she enjoys time with her family, including her younger brother Hayden and their dog, Archie.

Her favorite motto, the FFA Creed— **"Learning to Do, Doing to Learn, Earning to Live, and Living to Serve"** — perfectly reflects her commitment to agricultural education. Welcome to CTE, Ms. Culbert!



Meet Miranda Barker & Chuck Cody:

The Perfect STEM Team to Spark New Ideas!

We're excited to introduce our two new CTE Middle School STEM teachers, Miranda Barker and Chuck Cody. These two educators are ready to inspire students and help them discover the many exciting opportunities within the world of STEM.

Miranda Barker (*pictured above*), a Picayune, Mississippi native, has called Sevier County home for many years. With 7 years of teaching experience in Charlotte, this is her first year in Cocke County. She has a Bachelors in Education and a Masters in Curriculum and Instruction from the University of Phoenix and Grand Canyon University. She currently lives in Cosby with her four children. When asked about her favorite part of teaching STEM, Miranda shared her passion for problem-solving. In fact, her goal this year is for students to develop into critical thinkers and problem solvers, and she embraces the challenge of answering all their questions.

When she's not teaching, Miranda dreams of learning how to renovate her house, and sushi bowls are her go-to meal. She draws inspiration from Benjamin Franklin's quote: "Tell me and I forget. Teach me and I remember. Involve me and I learn." It's a motto she's eager to apply to her classroom this year.

Chuck Cody (*pictured below with his wife, Kaycee, and their nearly two-year-old son, Chipper*) is a Newport, Tennessee native who has spent 16 years in education. After two years teaching high school Social Studies in Gallatin, TN, he spent 13 years at Edgemont Elementary, where he taught Science, Social Studies, and served as the school librarian.

Chuck holds a degree in History/Secondary Education from Walters State and ETSU, a Master's in Sport Management from ETSU, and a Graduate Certification in Instructional Leadership from Bethel University.

Chuck's favorite part of teaching STEM and Career Exploration is how the subject can engage every student, no matter their interests. His ultimate goal is for students to walk away with a broader view of career opportunities available to them.

Chuck's motto for his students is: "Pride yourself in wanting to do the things no one else wants to do." He's excited to bring this mindset to the classroom and encourage students to embrace challenges.

We welcome ALL to the CTE Cocke County family!!





Industry partnerships are at the heart of Career and Technical Education (CTE), creating invaluable opportunities for students to explore careers, gain hands-on experience, and connect with professionals in their fields of interest. These partnerships not only provide financial support but also help bridge the gap between classroom learning and the real-world skills students need to succeed. By working closely with local businesses and industry leaders, CTE programs can offer students a deeper understanding of career expectations, the latest advancements in their chosen fields, and the importance of workplace readiness. This past semester, the Cocke County Schools CTE team worked diligently to expand these connections, securing sponsorships, work-based learning placements, and special learning experiences for students at all levels.

LOCAL INDUSTRY INVESTS IN CAREER EXPLORATION THROUGH CLUSTER SPONSORSHIPS

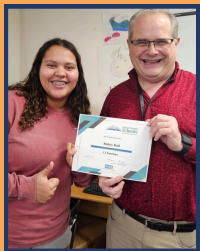
One of the most exciting advancements this year is the development of the CTE Career Exploration Center, a key feature of the new Cocke County Innovation Center. This dedicated space offers middle school students a hands-on introduction to seven career clusters through interactive pods, each designed to showcase a different industry.

Thanks to the commitment and generosity of local businesses and organizations, every pod now has an industry sponsor. These sponsors provide financial support, real-world insights, and professional connections that enhance the learning experience. This year's career cluster sponsors are shown below.

Look for pics in the next issue!



Work-Based Learning: Connecting Students with Industry Opportunities



For high school students ready to take their career interests to the next level, industry partnerships play a crucial role in Work-Based Learning (WBL). Local businesses have opened their doors to provide students with hands-on, real-world experiences in fields such as healthcare, manufacturing, agriculture, and business. These placements allow students to apply classroom knowledge in professional settings, build essential workplace skills, and gain valuable mentorship from industry professionals. The continued support of our local employers ensures that students graduate better prepared for postsecondary education, apprenticeships, and the workforce.

On Dec. 16, a celebration was held for Sem 1 students where they were presented completion certificates by WBL teacher, Mr. Mark Grigsby. Pictured left is Cosby's Maybry "Alannta" Ball receiving hers from Mr. Grigsby.



WBL Semester 1 Completers:

CCHS: (Front) Jerry Cody, Jameson Brevard, Cayelesa Williamson, Lillianna Sane, and **(Back)** Leocadio Campos-Nuci, Dimitri Winters, Julian Welcome, Ty Coleman, Edward Luebke; **(Not pictured)** Anthony Hale, Olivia Lewis, Andrew Roach, Braxton Shults, and David Wilson

CHS: (Back right) Caden Uhls; **(Above left with Mr. Grigsby)** Maybry Ball, **(Not pictured)** Kara Shults.

Thank you to these industries for providing WBL placements:

C. J. Popadop's
Coke Co. Sheriff's Office
Coke Co. Board of Ed.
Cedarwood Veterinary Clinic
Smoky Mtn Farmer's Co-Op
Leo's Landscaping

No Limit Engineering
NAPA-Mister Automotive
Tidal Wave Auto Spa
Tim Cody's Tree Service
The Woodshed
Walmart

Work-Based Learning (WBL). WBL is a dynamic educational approach that bridges the gap between academic learning and real-world work experiences, providing students with invaluable opportunities to explore careers, develop essential skills, and make meaningful connections in the workforce.

Reports from our CTSOs...

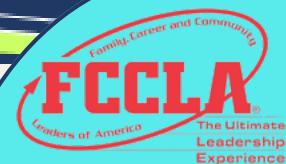
FCCLA Advisory Council Meeting: Reflecting, Planning and Growing

After the hectic fair season during the 1st nine-weeks, FCCLA students and sponsors, **Ashley Dudley and Rebekah Fisher**, used Quarter 2 as a chance to reflect, regroup and plan. To help with this process, they hosted an **FCCLA Advisory Council** meeting on Monday, December 16th.

The meeting was attended by a variety of stakeholders. As sponsors and CTSO members presented to the group, the attendees dined on a variety of refreshments made by the students. Topics discussed included explanations of their programs, classes, enrollment numbers, and the certifications students could earn. Students also showcased their competitions and activities.

After the presentation, club sponsors requested feedback, sought ideas for fundraisers, and encouraged industry partners to assist with college and career projects or opportunities.

Advisory Council



FCCLA stands for Family, Career and Community Leaders of America. It is a national CTSO for young men and women in Family and Consumer Sciences education in high school. The organization aims to promote personal growth and leadership development through Family & Consumer Sciences education, focusing on the multiple roles of being a family member, wage earner, and community leader.

An **ADVISORY COUNCIL** in the context of a **Career & Technical Education (CTE) program** is a group of industry professionals, educators, community leaders, and other stakeholders who provide guidance and support to ensure that CTE programs align with workforce needs and industry standards. Their primary role is to advise on curriculum development, equipment and technology needs, work-based learning opportunities, and emerging industry trends. Advisory councils help strengthen the connection between education and employment by ensuring students gain relevant skills and experiences that prepare them for high-demand careers.

National FFA Convention:

A Memorable Experience for Cocke County and Cosby FFA

In late October 2024, the Future Farmers of America (FFA) chapters from Cocke County High School and Cosby High School proudly represented their community at the 97th National FFA Convention & Expo in Indianapolis, Indiana. The event, held from October 23-26, 2024, brought together FFA members from across the nation to engage in competitions, leadership workshops, and networking opportunities.

A highlight of the convention was a keynote address by Dr. Temple Grandin, a renowned animal behaviorist and autism advocate. Diagnosed with autism at a young age, Dr. Grandin has made significant contributions to animal science, particularly in designing humane livestock handling facilities. (Citation: grandin.com)

Beyond their participation in various competitive events, the students explored Indianapolis, visiting local attractions and experiencing the city's culture. The trip offered a balance of educational and recreational activities, leaving attendees with lasting memories and inspiration for their future endeavors.

The dedication of these students and their advisors underscores the vibrant agricultural education programs at Cocke County High School and Cosby High School. Their active involvement in the National FFA Convention & Expo highlights a commitment to leadership, personal growth, and career success in the agricultural sector.

Noteables:

CCHS FFA- National Chapter 3-Star Ranking (highest), Nate Mason (page 2) and Olivia Lewis (right), who received a **GOLD** Ranking in Small Animal Production proficiency



The **National FFA Organization, or FFA (originally, Future Farmers of America)**, is a youth organization that prepares students for leadership and careers in agriculture.



CTSO

CTSO stands for **Career and Technical Student Organizations**. These are student-led organizations in the United States that are specifically focused on career and technical education (CTE) fields. These organizations provide students with opportunities for leadership development, career exploration, and skill-building activities related to various vocational fields.



Cosby High School FFA Wraps Up a Busy Second Nine Weeks



Click below to see us on FB:

CHS FFA

Boy, were they busy! The Cosby High School FFA chapter had an action-packed second nine weeks, filled with projects, events, and hands-on learning experiences. From giving back to the community to sharpening their agricultural skills, these students showcased leadership and dedication in a variety of activities.

"Everything But the Gobbler!"

FFA's Thanksgiving Drive Feeds Local Families

During October and November, Cosby High School FFA members put their creativity to work by designing collection boxes for a Thanksgiving food and item drive. But they didn't stop there! Members invited school teams, individuals, and clubs to join the effort, asking them to contribute decorated boxes filled with non-perishable holiday meal essentials.

On **Wednesday, November 27th**, FFA members delivered the carefully crafted and generously stocked boxes to **Feed My Sheep Ministries**, ensuring that local families in need had a special holiday meal. A total of **25 families** received the donated boxes—each packed with everything but the turkey!

This meaningful project not only provided meals to families but also strengthened the spirit of giving within the school and community. Through teamwork and service learning, Cosby FFA members demonstrated the true meaning of Thanksgiving.



CTSO

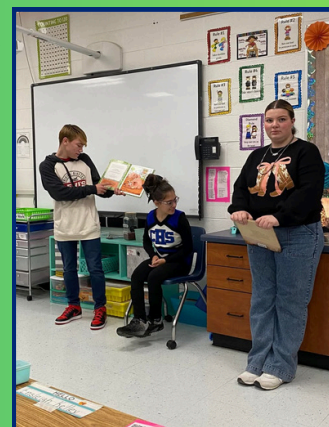
Career Technical Student Organization

Books, Barns, and Bright Minds: Cultivating Literacy & AG

From November 18-22, Cosby High School FFA members stepped into the role of educators, sharing their love of agriculture with younger students during Ag Literacy Week. Under the guidance of Mrs. Jennifer Noe, agriculture students visited various classrooms, reading books about farming, food production, and the importance of agriculture in everyday life.

FFA members Alee Leatherwood, Cheyanne Gooms, Kara Shults, Kari Lane Shults, and Christian Rymer participated in this literacy initiative, helping young students make connections between agriculture and their daily lives. One dedicated member, Cheyanne Gooms, even traveled to Grassy Fork Elementary to bring the joy of ag literacy to students there.

By reading to younger students, these FFA members helped plant the seeds of agricultural awareness, ensuring that future generations understand and appreciate the industry that feeds and clothes the world.



All Aboard!" for Polar Express Movie Night

On December 16th, Cosby High School FFA members came together for a magical evening at their **Polar Express Movie Night**—a perfect way to celebrate Christmas on The Hill! To attend, students brought winter clothing donations, which were later distributed to those in need, making the event both festive and meaningful.

Along with enjoying the holiday classic, students indulged in French sweet treats and designed their own custom Christmas flower arrangements, adding a creative touch to the night. Laughter, friendship, and the holiday spirit filled the room, giving members a well-earned chance to relax before finishing out the semester.

As the final school days of 2024 wrapped up, Cosby FFA closed out the year in true FFA fashion—giving back, learning new skills, and making memories together.



Lighting up the Night at Newport Christmas Parade

Both **CCHS** and **CHS** FFA members got into the holiday spirit by decorating their very own floats for the Newport/Cocke County Christmas Parade on Friday, December 6th. This annual parade was the perfect opportunity for members to showcase their creativity and FFA pride with festive decorations and bright lights. Their hard work and teamwork made for floats that was both merry and memorable, proving that FFA shines bright—no matter the season!



Making Waves: Agriculture Students Earn Boater's Licenses

Several CHS's agriculture students from Semester 1 recently earned their Tennessee Boater's Licenses, demonstrating their commitment to safety and responsibility on the water. *Congratulations to these students for navigating their way to success!*





CCHS FFA's Fall Adventures: We've Been Cookin' and Showin'!



The second 9-weeks of the school year has been packed with exciting projects and events for the Coker County High School FFA members. From community outreach to delicious cook-offs, the FFA students have truly embraced the spirit of service and hands-on learning. Here are some highlights that showcase their hard work and dedication. We look forward to seeing what they'll accomplish next!

A Touch of Ag: FFA Makes Sensory Board for CDC

On November 22, a group of FFA members visited the high school's CDC classroom to present a unique agricultural-themed sensory board. Thanks to the National FFA *Living to Serve Grant*, students were able to create this interactive board, which aims to both educate and engage.



The sensory board features a variety of materials, with additional items located on the backside, allowing students to explore agriculture through different textures, sounds, and visuals. The FFA hopes this board will spark curiosity and create inviting learning experiences for all students.

3rd Annual Soup Cook-off - A Delicious Success

The FFA's 3rd Annual Soup Cook-off held on November 26 was a hit, with the taco soup taking the crown. Julie Mason claimed 1st place with her mouth-watering creation, while Kalli Crowder and family brought home 2nd place for their dish. The event, which brought the community together over bowls of hearty soup, also served as a moment to celebrate CCHS FFA's achievements. During the event, a plaque that was made by two students from the Machining class was on display (see Page 2). It's clear that the FFA's spirit of teamwork and friendly competition makes this event a must-attend each year!



CCHS Landscaping Class Spruces Up School Grounds

CCHS's Landscaping class has been hard at work during the Fall semester, tackling various projects to beautify the school grounds. Students put landscaping fabric around raised garden beds to prevent weeds

and worked on the flagpole area, enduring the cold, rain, and snow to make sure the area looks pristine. Additionally, students gained practical skills in operating a tractor, giving them hands-on experience with equipment they may use in future careers. It's great to see them applying classroom knowledge to make a tangible impact on the school environment!



SHOW PIGS HIT THE TRAIL: MEET JIMMY DEAN AND HICKORY SMOKE

CCHS FFA members have been hitting the pig show trail, and their show pigs, Jimmy Dean and Hickory Smoke, have been making waves. Handled by Kalli Crowder and Hailee Hartsell, these two pigs competed in their first show at the Jingle Bell Rockout Classic on November 29. They then went on to represent CCHS at the state show held December 13-14. This experience has given the students valuable hands-on skills in animal care, training, and showmanship, all of which are key components of FFA's mission to prepare students for leadership in agriculture.



PAMPERED PUPS: FFA's FEATHER & FUR CO. GOES TO WORK

In an exciting venture started last year, the CCHS FFA members have launched their own dog grooming business, Feather & Fur Co., offering grooming services to school faculty and staff. On Tuesdays and Thursdays, faculty can bring their pets to school, where they are pampered with a bath, nail trim, and brush while their owners are at work. A tidy-up trim is available for just \$5 more. The basic grooming service costs \$15-25, depending on the size of the dog, with a special price for doodles based on their coat type. This hands-on project allows students to gain experience in the pet care industry, all while providing a valuable service to the school community.



Bringing Costumes and Games (Not To Mention JOY) to Wellington Manor

Students from the Career and Technical Education (CTE) Nursing Services and Therapeutic Services programs at both Cocke County High School and Cosby High School have been making a meaningful impact on their community. As part of their service-learning initiatives and their involvement in HOSA, a Career and Technical Student Organization (CTSO), students from both schools visited Wellington Manor, an assisted living facility, to spread joy and connection through engaging activities. A special thank you to Wellington Manor and its administrators for welcoming the students and allowing them to participate in these rewarding experiences.

HALLOWEEN FUN WITH CTE NURSING STUDENTS



On Halloween, CTE students from both high schools participating in the **Nursing Clinicals** program, led by instructor **Mr. Mark Grigsby**, visited Wellington Manor to bring festive cheer to the residents. Dressed in costumes and full of energy, the students entertained and engaged with the residents, brightening their day with laughter and conversation. Their costumes included M&Ms, Minnie Mouse, cowgirls, a minion, and even the Robinson family from Duck Dynasty, adding to the fun and excitement.

Pictured above from the visit (Left to Right) are: **Rori Jones, Emma Arrowood, Callie Styles, Abigail Belcher, Aaliyah Timmons, Alessia Mahony, Riley Thomas, Jocelyn Waits, Kyndal Hopkins, and Tabaya Spencer.**

This visit provided students with a meaningful opportunity to apply their learning in a compassionate, real-world setting while also strengthening community bonds.



HOSA

HOSA, or Health Occupations Students of America, is a national organization focused on preparing students for careers in healthcare. HOSA provides hands-on learning, leadership training, and competitive events in fields like medical terminology, nursing, and public health.



BINGO and Gifts with Cosby High HOSA Students

Continuing the tradition of service, Cosby High School HOSA students visited Wellington Manor on December 16th, bringing warmth and kindness to the residents. Under the guidance of their sponsor, **Mrs. Kim Hurst**, the students led a lively game of BINGO, with **Gabriella Vaughn and Anastasia Laws** taking turns calling out the numbers. To make the day even more special, HOSA provided each resident with a pair of fluffy socks and chapstick, along with prizes such as blankets, jewelry, and snacks.

The students who participated in the visit were **Tabaya Spencer, Alessia Mahony, Paizleigh Ford, Arianna Hough, Kalene Rosemeyer, Ansley Cobble, Haley Brooks, Ariela Holt, Jayson Edenfield, and Abigail Ballard.** Their efforts reflect the dedication of HOSA members to serving their community and making a positive impact on the lives of others.



CTSO

Career Technical Student Organization



JAG Cocke County: Spreading Joy, Learning, and Leadership



Jobs for America's Graduates (JAG) is a national non-profit program that helps students facing barriers to graduation and employment by providing career readiness training, leadership development, and job placement support.

As the crisp air of fall gave way to the twinkling lights of winter, the students of JAG Cocke County embraced the season of giving in more ways than one. From raising funds for their future endeavors to representing Cocke County on a national stage and learning from local industry experts, the second nine weeks of the school year have been a whirlwind of activity, camaraderie, and gratitude. These students aren't just learning about career readiness; they are learning the invaluable lesson that success is best shared.



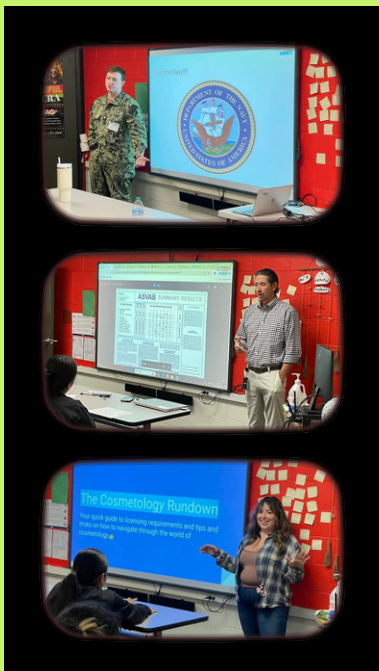
Boo Baskets and Blessing Bags: Fundraising with a Purpose

The JAG Cocke County students know that big dreams require big effort—and sometimes, a little bit of Halloween magic! To support their future trips and opportunities, they kicked off their fundraising season in October with the sale of **"Boo Baskets."** These festive creations, available in different sizes, were packed with goodies and spooky surprises, making them a hit among students and staff alike. But the generosity didn't stop there!

As November rolled around, the students shifted their focus to gratitude and giving. They put together **"Blessing Bags,"** filled with thoughtful items meant to bring joy and comfort to those who received them. In JAG, it's not just about working hard—it's about playing hard, too, and celebrating the bonds that make them a family. Their teacher, Ms. **Julie Barcikowski**, summed it up best: *"JAG TN was at the top of the blessings list, specifically for all the life preparedness and post-secondary opportunities it has offered, and for the friendships it has afforded everyone. Who would have ever thought that one class would make people feel blessed beyond measure!"*

Career Conversations: Learning from the Best

Beyond fundraising and travel, JAG Cocke County students had the privilege of learning firsthand from professionals in a variety of fields during the second nine weeks. Guest speakers took time out of their busy schedules to share their knowledge, career journeys, and insights on how to get started in various industries. Special thanks go to **Petty Officer Felts, Cedarwood Vet, Knoxville MEPS/ASVAB**, and hairstylist **Carolyn Bordinger** for providing invaluable guidance and inspiration.



Taking on D.C.: Leadership, Legacy, and Lights



In December, five outstanding JAG students packed their bags and took their talents to the nation's capital for the JAG Leadership Conference, held from December 4-8, 2024. Led by their fearless facilitator, Ms. Barcikowski, the students—Gracelyn Davis, Emerald Ottinger, Elijah Hembree, Charles Daniels, and JAG Tennessee State President Edna Santiago-Lopez—represented Cocke County High School with pride and professionalism.

The conference offered a mix of leadership training, student networking events, and an awards dinner, allowing these future leaders to connect with peers from across Tennessee and the nation.

One of the most memorable moments of the trip was Gracelyn Davis's participation in the Wreath Ceremony at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, a solemn and humbling experience (see page 2 for more details).

When they weren't engaged in conference activities, the group had the opportunity to visit iconic landmarks such as the Lincoln Memorial and the Washington Monument—made even more magical by the dazzling Christmas decorations adorning the city. As Ms. Barcikowski reflected, *"They represented Cocke County High School with poise, made lifelong memories, and truly experienced the best of what JAG has to offer."*



SkillsUSA is a national CTSO focused on promoting skills development, leadership, and industry engagement among students in various technical fields.

****CTE Students Attend SkillsUSA Fall Leadership Conference****

On **November 8, 2024**, Career and Technical Education (CTE) students from across the region gathered at **Northeast State Community College** for the highly anticipated **SkillsUSA Fall Leadership Conference**. This event provided an exceptional platform for students to enhance their leadership skills, engage in hands-on workshops, and connect with industry professionals.

The conference featured a variety of sessions aimed at developing critical skills necessary for success in today's competitive job market. Participants had the opportunity to learn about emerging trends in various industries, participate in team-building exercises, and network with peers and mentors.

Students attending were: **Bo Proffitt, Deegan Crum, Coven Wise, Colton Sane, Waylon Gossett, Justin Gregg, Wyatt O'Bryon, Rafe Faustino, Austin Friesner, Carson Carrell, Kaylee Gilliland, Kaden Showman, Tyler Wines, Eli Roberts, Brady Calfee, Zachary Williams, Jackson Williams, Conner Burchette, Landon Sane, David Willson, Lukas Denton, Hunter Lowery, Kysen Butler, Madison Williamson, Ethan Nease, Jackson Clark, Kaden O'Bryon, Alyssa White, Levi Sutton, and Aiden Kendall.**

Interested in joining SkillsUSA? Speak to a CTE teacher in any of these programs:

At Cocke Co. High School: Architecture & Engineering Design, Automotive Collision Repair, Automotive Maintenance, Coding, Criminal Justice & Correctional Services, Culinary Arts, Industrial Maintenance Technology, Machining Technology, Residential & Commercial Construction, and/or Welding.

At Cosby High School: Criminal Justice & Correctional Services, Hospitality & Tourism Management, and/or Industrial Maintenance Technology

A Quick Apology

I appreciate your patience in receiving this edition of the CTE newsletter a little later than intended. With the start of a the new Spring term, unexpected school cancellations, and the inevitable catch-up that followed, things have been a bit hectic—especially with all the exciting CTE happenings to cover! Thank you for your understanding, and I hope you enjoy this update on the great things happening in our programs.

With Warmest Thanks,
Crystal McGaha
CTE Career Counselor



A Look Ahead: More CTE to Come!!!

Stay tuned to read about these items in our next issue:

- **Meet the new WBL Coordinator**
- **Join Parrottsville's 7th graders as they start CTE classes at the new Innovation Center**
- **See pics from the Innovation Center Open House -- Does the person in the pic milk a cow??**



ATTENTION: 9th & 10th graders:

Are you interested in earning an **Industry 4.0 Diploma Distinction** for graduation? If so, you **MUST** be registered **before May 1st** of your sophomore (10th grade) school year.

CLICK [HERE](#) for more information.

Missed Our Previous Issues??

Click on the banner below to view them.

The CTE Spotlight

Highlighting Career Technical Education in Cocke County Schools

Next issue coming April 2025 covering Jan. - Mar. (Q3)

Boy, do we have some news for you!!

If you enjoyed this **The CTE Spotlight** and would like to stay informed about CTE activities/events within the Cocke County School System, **click the button.**

SUBSCRIBE

Any questions, concerns, suggestions, or corrections to this newsletter should be directed to:
Mrs. Crystal McGaha, CTE Career Counselor, by emailing mcgahac@cocke.k12.tn.us.