HHS junior Elise Nelson elected to FBLA state office for 2009-10

The snow storm that hit and closed down I-70 on Saturday, April 18 did not stop a successful year for Holyoke's Future Business Leaders of America (FBLA).

Fourteen members of the Holyoke chapter wowed the judges at the State Leadership Conference in Vail April 19-21 and brought home an array of plaques, certificates and medals.

Added FBLA adviser Kristina Ham, "This is an impressive feat considering that over 2,500 people attended the conference."

However, as of Saturday, April 18—the day the group was scheduled to leave-—it was questionable whether the Holyoke group would even make it to the State Conference. Transportation director Robert Jacobs called Ham that day, requesting that FBLA members be put on hold as he determined whether the roads were safe to travel.

Shortly after noon, he decided it would better for the bus loaded with students to leave at 4:30 a.m. on Sunday. "This was a sound decision," said Ham, "because the bus did not encounter icy roads all the way to Vail, with the exception of a little slipperiness inside the Eisenhower Tunnel."

A highlight of the conference for the Holyoke chapter was the selection of Elise Nelson as the 2009-10 State Secretary. To get the selection, she had to finish a variety of tasks for the nominating process.

Nelson was required to write an article and submit it to the state publication, Colorado FBLA Today. A resume and three letters of recommendation were also required. She then had to write and present a two and a half minute speech, and was interviewed and observed for her leadership qualities.

Said Ham, "She is one of the many to carry on the legacy as a state secretary from Holyoke High School."

Other students who qualified for nationals at the state leadership conference were Sydney Nelson, Chasity Pelle and Kendra Timm for their American Enterprise Project; Briar Bergner, KrisAnna Ham and Sarah Heermann for their Local Chapter Annual Business Report; and Sarah Heermann's individual Job Interview Project also qualified.

Holyoke FBLA was also awarded the PEAK V Award. This event was completed by Diana Baeza and Karla Cruz. The Peak Awards range from Peak I to Peak V, with Peak V being the highest award available. This award requires chapters to submit information in a bound portfolio format.

Each FBLA chapter completes and documents a total of 21 activities, including six activities from the Membership and Chapter Management section, four activities from the Community and School Service section and 11 activities from the Education and Progress section.

Additional results from the state leadership conference are as follows:

Megan Colglazier, Elise Nelson and Brian DeBoer—Partnership with Business, third place.

Whitni Redman—Intro to Parliamentary Procedure, fifth place.

Samantha Redfern, Parker Redfern, Broc Pelle, Mark Edmonds, Geoffrey Mattson and Nicole Brandt—Community Service Project, fifth place.

Nicole Brandt—Business Procedures, ninth place.

Also entering the contest were Brooke Parker and Catrina Krueger with Emerging Business Issues.

Businesses helping students attend this year by giving the chapter donations include First Pioneer National Bank, Grainland Co-op and Bank of Colorado. These businesses were recognized at the State Leadership Conference for their continued support of FBLA.

According to Ham, “Holyoke FBLA wouldn’t be as rich as it is without chaperones willing to stay up late, solve all kinds of little ‘happenings,’ and be willing to enter rooms where four high school students have been staying and brave whatever may be lying on the floor. That brave individual this year was Lori Nelson.”