

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Sumter Students Compete at International HOSA

[Bushnell, Florida] –South Sumter High School students from the HOSA - future health professionals student organization - recently attended the 47th Annual HOSA International Leadership Conference in Houston, Texas. Naomi Reed and Destiny Barnes, both recent graduates of South Sumter High School, competed among the top students in the world. Students from Canada, China, the United States and American Samoa were among the competitors at the conference held June 26-29, 2024. Naomi competed in the Medical Law & Ethics Knowledge test, while Destiny competed in the Sports Medicine Health Profession event. Destiny placed 8th overall in her event proving that Sumter students can compete with anyone in the world!

HOSA is a global student-led organization recognized by the U.S. Department of Education and the Department of Health and Human Services and several federal and state agencies. HOSA's mission is to empower HOSA-Future Health Professionals to become leaders in the global health community, through education, collaboration, and experience. HOSA actively promotes career opportunities in the health industry and to enhance the delivery of quality health care to all people. HOSA's goal is to encourage all health science instructors and students to affiliate and be actively involved in the HSE-HOSA Partnership. HOSA provides a unique program of leadership development, motivation, and recognition exclusively for secondary, postsecondary, middle school, adult, and collegiate students enrolled in health science education and biomedical science programs or have interests in pursuing careers in health professions. HOSA is 100% health care! Since its inception in 1976, HOSA has grown steadily reaching over 260,000 members through 54 chartered HOSA Associations, American Samoa, Canada, China, District of Columbia and Puerto Rico. HOSA's mission is especially critical when considering the acute shortage of qualified workers for the health care industry. This shortage has been amplified by the COVID-19 pandemic. In the Spring of 2020, countless doctors and nurses returned to the frontline out of retirement and medical school allowed students to graduate early to fight the pandemic. HOSA is a viable solution to health industry shortages. HOSA advisors globally are promoting the health professions and ensuring that future health professionals are prepared for college and their health profession of choice! (Source: <https://hosa.org>)

Student career education activities such as these continue to fulfill the district's vision that every student would graduate enrolled in a college, enlisted in service or employed in a career.

Career and Technical Education (CTE) is a modern approach to higher education and training, and it can accelerate personal and professional success. With little to no barriers to enrollment and 17 career pathways to choose from, individuals can acquire the skills needed through real-world, hands-on experience. As teachers prepare CTE students for their future careers as skilled professionals, students engage in hands-on learning with real life applications. These approaches to teaching are linked to greater understanding, comprehension, and retention. CTE offers a way for students to gain skills and earn certifications in some of Florida's most critical and desirable industries. Unlike traditional higher education, CTE programs can set individuals on the right path in less time with less cost. That means they can get into a career today without the worry of debt tomorrow.

*For more information about **Sumter County Schools**, call **352-793-2315**. For more information about Career and Technical Education in Florida, visit GetThereFL.com.*



South Sumter High School student Destiny Barnes placed 8th in the International HOSA competition for the Sports Medicine Health Profession.



Destiny Barnes of South Sumter High School (second from right) was recognized with peer competitors from other nations at the HOSA International Conference in Houston June 26-29, 2024.