**Howell High School Students Excel at State DECA Competition**

**HOWELL, Mich., March 24, 2023 -** Howell High School DECA club members excelled at the recent DECA State Competition. Two teams were named state champions in their categories and advanced to the DECA International competition next month. Five other teams were named state finalists and earned medals, one team was awarded a high role-play medal, and one student earned two role-play medals and a high test medal. Advancing to the international competition are Jillian Smith and Aubrey Bellenir in the Buying and Merchandising category and Jacob Clark and Elise LaCour in the Financial Services category. The DECA international competition will be held in Orlando, Florida, April 21-26.

The students named state finalists were Mia Cholewa, Connor Ford, Ethan Lynn, Lea MacGregor, McKenna Pasini, Ethan Urban, Sawyer Gray, Lucas Wood, Duncan Gray and Katherine Zajas. High role-play medals were awarded to Delaney Hoyes, Connor Ford, and Ethan Lynn. Dustin Docusen earned a high test medal. While these students will not advance to the international competition, it is still a great accomplishment to earn medals in the highly competitive events.

“The DECA state competition is a highly competitive event, and students must first compete at a DECA district competition to earn the right to compete at the state level. Howell is part of a five-county district consisting of Livingston, Washtenaw, Lenawee, Jackson, and Ingham counties,” said Robert Klein, Howell High School business teacher, and DECA advisor. “I am so proud of our students whose hard work paid off at the state competition. It has been fun to watch as they developed their projects and professional skills in preparation for the competition.”

In the DECA competition, students must complete a traditional exam and a case study focused on their category. For the case study, students must prepare and present a 15-minute presentation to a judge who works in a related industry. In total 28 Howell students advanced from the regional competition to the state event.

**About DECA**

DECA is a high-energy organization designed to prepare students to be college and career-ready upon graduation. DECA has over 225,000 members in 5,000 high school chapters from all 50 states and nine countries. Students gain experience through interactive classroom activities and by attending DECA Conferences throughout the school year.