



**CORPORATE
CHALLENGES**
2026-2027



CORPORATE CHALLENGES

COMPREHENSIVE LEARNING PROGRAM

CHALLENGES



ENGAGE IN A UNIQUE, HANDS-ON LEARNING EXPERIENCE

DECA members use creativity and innovation to help companies or organizations solve a problem or promote a cause through a unique, specific challenge.

- Each challenge has a unique focus and specific set of tasks and timelines.
- The top performers in each challenge will receive on-stage recognition at the DECA International Career Development Conference with approval from the chartered association advisor.
- The list of challenges is included in the DECA Guide with the submission due dates.
- Check deca.org/challenges for official guidelines

DECA.ORG/CHALLENGES

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WHY CORPORATE CHALLENGES?

- Connects to industry
- Skill development
- Implement in the classroom
- Project-based learning



CHALLENGE SPONSORS



BRINGING CHALLENGES INTO YOUR CLASSROOM

Introduce challenges at the start of the year

Early exposure gives students time to research, create and refine high-quality work.

Start small, start early

Map any challenges that connect to your courses/units

Have students research the partner's brand, mission and audience before they start creating



BRINGING CHALLENGES INTO YOUR CLASSROOM

Put your chapter officer team to work

Officers can promote deadlines and support members through the process

Frame challenges as both competitive and fun



REEDY HIGH SCHOOL ADVISOR SPOTLIGHT

Elizabeth Martin, DECA Advisor

4 teams from Reedy High School earned Top 3 in one of the DECA Corporate Challenges in 2025-2026

“Challenges allow our members to work with authentic corporate partners, understand brand identity and apply classroom concepts in a competitive yet creative way.”



SPOTLIGHT: REEDY HIGH SCHOOL

Classroom integration — ties each Corporate Challenge to lesson units that match the partner's industry

Real research — has students study brand identity, mission and audience before creating

Professional tools — pairs DECA's brand guidelines with Adobe Express or Canva

Officer support — puts her Virtual Event officers to work on deadlines and accountability

Early start — encourages members to choose a challenge early, leaving time to research and revise

MATCH A CHALLENGE TO YOUR COURSE

DECA at the Bell: Marketing

Social Influence in the Real-World: Marketing, Entrepreneurship

Social Media Marketing Simternship: Marketing

Hospitality Sustainability Innovation: Hospitality + Tourism

Personal Branding: Marketing, Career Readiness

Disability Is Diversity: Business Management + Administration

Procurement for the Public Good: Business Management + Administration

Social Impact Leader: Marketing, Entrepreneurship

The Future of Accounting: Marketing, Finance, Business Management + Administration

Food Truck: Entrepreneurship, Marketing

Digital Presentation Skills: Business Management + Administration — can fit any course

Insurance Pathways Innovation in Action: Marketing, Finance, Entrepreneurship

CLASSROOM IMPLEMENTATION APPROACHES

Whole Class Model: The entire class works on same challenge

- Use with the entire class regardless of whether they are a DECA member
- If using with non-DECA members, partner those individuals together

Choice Board Model: Students select a challenge based on interest or that fits your course

- Perfect for short weeks or post-assessment periods when students need engaging, flexible work

Capstone/Applied Learning: Challenges provide real-world application opportunities

- Use as final project or integrate with curriculum units: Food Truck with entrepreneurship, Personal Branding with career exploration

After-School: Voluntary participation for interested members

- Students apply classroom knowledge outside instructional time through self-paced work or chapter meeting collaboration

GRADING + ASSESSMENT STRATEGIES

Use the challenge rubric or adapt one to your standards

Grade the process, not just final submission (drafts, peer review, reflection)

Can count as: unit project, assessment, portfolio piece, bonus points

Non-DECA participants get the same grade scale, just don't submit officially to DECA

Some advisors pick the top from class to submit to DECA or let DECA members submit on their own if they choose to

PERFORMANCE INDICATORS					
1.	Select appropriate target market for the best return on marketing investment.	0-1-2-3	4-5-6-7	8-9-10-11	12-13-14-15
2.	Explain considerations in developing the marketing campaign.	0-1-2	3-4-5-6	7-8	9-10
3.	Identify and explain selected direct marketing strategies.	0-1-2	3-4-5-6	7-8	9-10
4.	Assess prospect's needs in relation to the product offering.	0-1-2	3-4-5-6	7-8	9-10
5.	Coordinate channel management with other marketing activities.	0-1-2	3-4-5-6	7-8	9-10
VIDEO PRESENTATION					
6.	Research into auction industry clearly demonstrated.	0-1-2	3-4-5-6	7-8	9-10
7.	Presentation demonstrates comprehensive and effective marketing plan.	0-1-2	3-4-5-6	7-8	9-10
8.	Provided supporting items such as images, item descriptions, promotional materials	0-1	2	3-4	5
9.	Poised under pressure, present polished and professional.	0-1	2	3-4	5
10.	Includes introduction & closing	0-1	2	3-4	5
11.	Team effort is visible • Team: were all team members active participants in final video presentation (not just standing there) • Individual: did they show individual initiative	0-1	2	3-4	5
12.	Engaging with clear verbal message	0-1	2	3-4	5
TOTAL SCORE (100 points)					

TIMELINE PLANNING TIPS

Map challenge due dates to your semester calendar

See where they could sync with your courses

Check your pacing guide - where do challenges naturally fit?

Use challenges during units they complement

October deadline = perfect first semester kickoff

December deadlines = great pre-winter break motivation

January deadlines = spring semester launch or continuation from fall



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

How much class time does this actually take?

Most challenges fit into 2-3 class periods for research and drafting, with students finishing production outside of class.

Can students use this toward an existing competitive event?

Often, yes. Many advisors use a challenge as prep or a portfolio piece for a related event, though submissions are separate.

Do non-DECA members need to join to participate?

No. Non-members can complete a challenge in class; they just can't submit it officially to DECA for awards.



CHALLENGES FOR 2026-2027

DECA AT THE BELL CHALLENGE



- 2-4 Participants
- Theme: Positioning
- Script (PDF, MLA Cited)
- Up to 3:30-Minute Video

Awards

- \$2,000 Scholarship per Team
- Release of Episode

Write and produce your own episode of DECA at the Bell, connecting a business concept to the world of DECA. The 2026 theme is Positioning.

DEADLINE: OCTOBER 30

SOCIAL INFLUENCE IN THE REAL WORLD CHALLENGE



Social influence tactics are persuasive strategies used by communication experts in marketing, advertising, and negotiation to effectively shape behavior and decision-making in various real-world situations. This challenge is the perfect opportunity to develop and apply your knowledge on these fascinating topics that are relevant to nearly every dimension of our daily lives.

- 2-3 Participants
- 3-5 Minute Video
- Mock-up Ads: Billboard or Video Format

Awards

- 1st - \$1,500
- 2nd - \$1,000
- 3rd - \$500

DEADLINE: NOVEMBER 30

SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING SIMTERNSHIP CHALLENGE



Take charge of a dynamic simulated company, strategically allocating your ad budget to maximize revenue. Craft captivating content, engage target audiences and analyze your metrics across simulation rounds. Showcase your social media marketing skills in this exciting challenge.

- Individual
- Virtual Simulation

Awards

- 1st - \$1,500
- 2nd - \$1,000
- 3rd - \$500

OPEN: OCTOBER 14 – DECEMBER 1

HOSPITALITY SUSTAINABILITY INNOVATION CHALLENGE



- 1-4 Participants
- 3-5 Minute Video
- Digital Assets (Mock-Up)

Awards

- 1st - \$1,500
- 2nd - \$1,000
- 3rd - \$500

Behind the scenes, hotels and resorts are working hard to reduce their environmental footprint. Your task is to select a hospitality brand and design a digital or experiential idea in a manner which encapsulates the hospitality brand's DNA that immerses guests and encourages them to participate in the hotel/resort's sustainability efforts. Participants can choose to focus on any aspect of sustainability and any digital medium.

DEADLINE: DECEMBER 11

PERSONAL BRANDING CHALLENGE



Develop a comprehensive personal brand that includes a logo, résumé and personal vision statement. Create your concept using Adobe Express tools and submit your project components on the template.

- Individual
- Adobe Express Template Website
 - Personal Logo
 - Resume
 - Personal Statement
 - Skills Showcase
 - Project Highlights
 - Call to Action

Awards

- 1st - \$2,500
- 2nd - \$1,500
- 3rd - \$1,000
- 4th - \$750
- 5th - 10th - \$250

DEADLINE: DECEMBER 18

ADOBE EXPRESS: CLASSROOM DESIGN TOOL

What Students Can Create:

1. Logos and branding materials
2. Social media content
3. Presentations and pitch decks
4. Resumes and portfolios
5. Marketing materials
6. Video projects

Why It Works:

- Free for education
- No design experience needed
- Professional results
- Career-ready skill

Challenge Connection:

Students learn Adobe Express through challenges, then apply it to:

- Competitive events
- Class projects across courses
- School-based enterprises
- Personal branding

DISABILITY IS DIVERSITY CHALLENGE



- 1-3 Participants
- 4 Minute Video

Awards

- Top team featured in Quest blog or magazine

Create a focused Disability Is Diversity presentation that highlights the obstacles and experiences of navigating an educational environment with differing abilities. Learn firsthand about the barriers encountered by a student with a disability and determine how you can advocate for needed change.

DEADLINE: DECEMBER 18

PROCUREMENT FOR THE PUBLIC GOOD CHALLENGE



Develop a solution to a purchasing, sourcing or an operational challenge impacting a school or community organization. Teams will evaluate options and recommend a strategy that improves value, efficiency, sustainability, innovation or overall impact. Final submissions should demonstrate research, critical thinking and strategic decision-making while addressing real-world organizational needs.

- 2-4 Participants
- 3-5 Minute Video
- Evaluation Matrix or Comparison Tool

Awards

- 1st - \$1,500
- 2nd - \$1,000
- 3rd - \$500

DEADLINE: JANUARY 8

SOCIAL IMPACT LEADER CHALLENGE



Demonstrate your creativity by developing the next breakthrough cause-marketing campaign for the National Pediatric Cancer Foundation (NPCF). Working in teams of up to four members, DECA chapters will create an original, innovative fundraising initiative that incorporates NPCF branding and advances its mission. Campaigns should feature an uplifting, hopeful message that inspires engagement and action, while showcasing strong marketing expertise, entrepreneurial thinking, and business acumen.

- 1-4 Participants
- 4 Minute Video
- Fundraising Campaign
- Social Media Campaign

Awards

- 1st - \$1,500
- 2nd - \$1,000
- 3rd - \$500

DEADLINE: JANUARY 8

THE FUTURE OF ACCOUNTING CHALLENGE



In this challenge, teams will act as consultants for the AICPA, a national professional association focused on supporting accounting professionals, and create a student-focused marketing and engagement plan. Participants will develop a strategy for the CPA Pipeline Team to help high school and college students better understand the value of student membership and increase interest in joining AICPA's student community.

- 2-3 Participants
- 3-5 Minute Video
- Financial Plan/Budget

Awards

- 1st - \$1,500
- 2nd - \$1,000
- 3rd - \$500

DEADLINE: JANUARY 11

FOOD TRUCK CHALLENGE



Create a unique food truck concept that meets the needs of a specific target market while effectively utilizing branding, design, and marketing strategies.

- 3-4 Participants
- Adobe Express Template Website
 - Branding + Logo
 - Food Truck Exterior Design
 - Menu Design
 - Social Media Marketing
 - Project Summary
 - Up to 60-Second Video

Awards

- 1st - \$6,000
- 2nd - \$4,000
- 3rd - \$2,000

DEADLINE: JANUARY 15

DIGITAL PRESENTATION SKILLS CHALLENGE



Knowledge Matters

Powered by eDynamic Learning

- Individual
- Virtual Simulation
- 1-2 Minute Presentation

Awards

- 1st - \$1,500
- 2nd - \$1,000
- 3rd - \$500

Demonstrate your digital presentation skills utilizing a Virtual Business simulation in a one-to two-minute digital presentation. The top finalists will deliver a live, digital presentation.

DEADLINE: FEBRUARY 1

INSURANCE PATHWAYS INNOVATION IN ACTION CHALLENGE



You are a young professional launching a new insurance agency and want to build the ultimate team of next gen leaders. Create a business plan introducing the key professionals you would hire, their essential duties to your company's success and how each role could be appealing to Gen Z.

- 1-4 Participants
- 3-5 Minute Video
- Mockup of Digital Assets

Awards

- 1st - \$1,500
- 2nd - \$1,000
- 3rd - \$500

DEADLINE: FEBRUARY 1

EARN CE CREDITS





QUESTIONS

Thank You!