

# DECA students advance to int'l competition

By Ritika Sanikommu  
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

As senior Alex Batts paced back and forth, his heart was racing from the unexpected win.

Batts and senior Joe Lucchese, his Business Law and Ethics Team Decision Making partner, have been in DECA for two years. This will be their first time at the International Career Development Conference, which will be held in Anaheim, California from April 26-29.

After advancing from the district competition, Batts and Lucchese placed first in their category at states which allowed them to go to internationals. Lucchese said the win at states came as a surprise.

"I was pretty shocked actually. I kind of assumed we'd get up there for one of the role-plays, 'cause you can get multiple medals. I thought we would only get one medal but they just kept calling our name," Lucchese said. "I was pretty shocked when I got the state champion medal."

DECA is a business organization that allows students who are interested in financial, marketing, business management and administration or hospitality and tourism careers to participate in a category specific to their interest. They would then take a test prior to the competition, and participate in role-play or other activities where they showcase their knowledge in any of the four.

At the state competition, categories are divided into flights. Depending on the number of people in each category, they will be separated into an even number of flights. The top scorers in each flight will win an event, role-play or test medal and move on to internationals.

According to DECA, in the Business Law and Ethics Team Decision Making event, "business law is U.S. law and will include contracts, product liability, employment and types of business ownership. The ethics component involves evaluating competing social values that may reasonably be argued from either side."

The pair also participated in role-play events in front of judges.

"It feels pretty cool, almost like it's sort of the real thing. That's what it's supposed to be, like a mimic of the actual situation," Lucchese said. "So it's a lot of pressure on you but Alex and I handled it pretty well."

In addition to Batts and Lucchese, seniors Adam Schade and Justin Rheame along with sophomore Kaitlyn Kolk will be going to internationals.

Kolk and her group members were chosen to write an essay about the school store to present at states.

"Once we found out that we placed gold, that was like our automatic ticket to go to California," she said.

DECA adviser Michelle Davis has been preparing students to compete for 18 years.

"At North and at South we kind of have the philosophy that the kids can put in as much as they want or as little as they want," she said. "We know that they're all really busy so we do DECA days in class so kids can practice. We'll (also) do it after school—meetings actually where kids can take practice tests and do practice role-plays."

DECA also provides scholarship and networking opportunities that allow members from across the world to connect with established business professionals. Kolk said she is also looking forward to the social aspect.

"There's going to be a ton of people from all different schools all over the world, and I'm expecting to meet a lot of new people and make a lot of new friends," she said.

Batts said he is expecting intense competition, especially compared to districts and states, but feels ready.

"It'll probably be very difficult. We actually had this set of two girls that we've been competing hard against, they were also in our district and they also moved on to internationals, so that just shows that the competition will be tough," Batts said. "I mean especially when you're talking about the top people from each of the states plus other countries around the world. I mean, it'll be tough but we're up to the challenge."

Although every year students from North qualify to compete at the international conference, and have been in the top 20, so far no one has been named an ICDC international champion. This means that Batts and Lucchese could be the first.

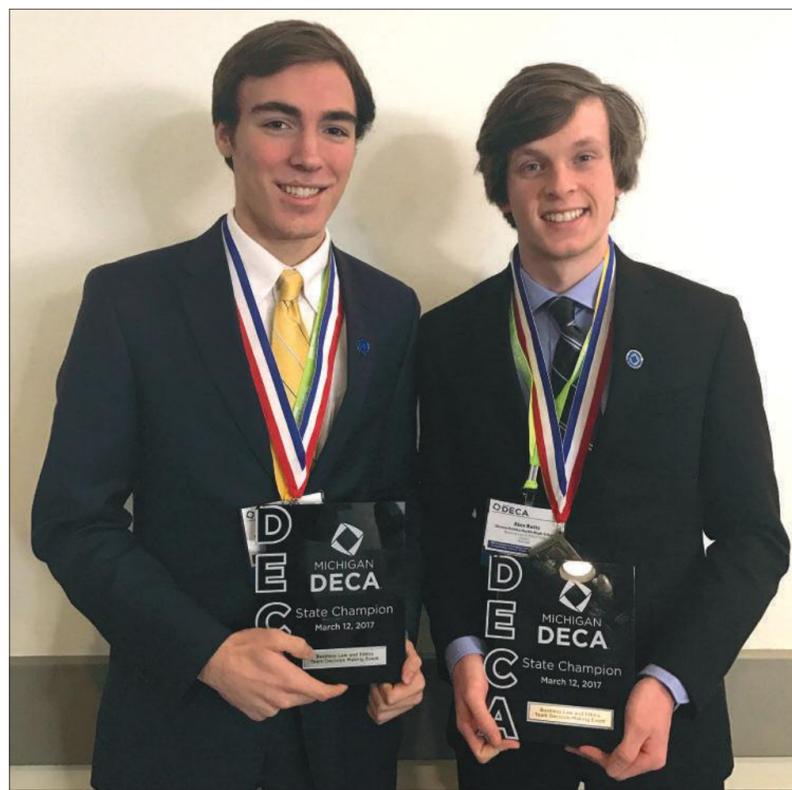
Davis feels that her low-pressure preparation methods are what makes her students successful.

"It's not so much about (being) emotional, it's more about seeing them achieve what they want to achieve. I want them to do the best they can and I think part of the reason that we do well at Grosse Pointe North and South year after year, there's not a lot of pressure on them. Some schools are practicing all summer and they're taking practice tests all the time and they're 100 percent in. My kids are 100 percent in when we're in it but there's no stress."

Contributing: Mora Downs



**STATES |** DECA members pose in the Cobo Center lobby. "At states we had two role-plays," senior Joe Lucchese said. "We had two interviews where we had to assist two company's inner problem and we did a good job."



**DECORATED COMPETITORS |** Seniors Joe Lucchese and Alex Batts pose with their state champion plaques from the Business Law and Ethics Team Decision Making Event.

# Band, orchestra compete at Festival Disney

By Caitlin Bush & Bella Lawson  
EDITOR & STAFF REPORTER

Once every four years, band and orchestra travel to Walt Disney World to compete in Festival Disney. This trip took place March 23-26, and the band performed in two concerts, one at Old Town, an amusement park located in Kissimmee, and another in the Festival Disney competition.

"We started them 20 years ago to build unity in the group and to have our groups adjudicated at national festivals to raise the bar and to give the students something to work toward," band director David Cleveland said.

Festival Disney is the biggest trip that band and orchestra participate in, according to Cleveland. The festival is open to concert bands, jazz ensembles, marching bands, orchestras, vocal ensembles and show choirs. The string orchestra, concert band and symphony band attend.

During the concert at Old Town, the ensembles played Disney-related songs. The String Orchestra performed "The Sorcerer's Apprentice" and "Pirates of the Caribbean." Concert Band performed "The Incredibles," "The Chronicles of Narnia: The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe" and "Disney's Magic Kingdom." Symphonic Band played "Disney at the Movies," "Mulan" and "Star Wars: The Force Awakens." For the Disney Festival the ensembles performed different pieces. These were not Disney pieces.

While on the trip, freshman Emma Troost was surprised at how well her band performed. Concert band received an excellence, symphony band received a superior and the string orchestra received a good.

"It went shockingly well," Troost said. "We did a lot better than I thought we were going to."

The band and orchestra participate in many competitions around the country. Senior PJ Gusmano said it is a good learning experience and enjoys showcasing what the ensembles work on.

"It is pretty cool because we get to take apart from our school and bring it to the places we've gone to," Gusmano said. "It can expand our horizons as a band and it will teach us how we can work together when we aren't comfortable at North."

Sophomore Charlotte Nicholson said she hopes the trip will expand her musical knowledge and thinks the ensembles can perform under pressure just as good as they perform in the classroom.

"It will benefit me as a performer to see how other schools compete and how competitive it actually is around the nation," Nicholson said.

Cleveland has chaperoned these trips for over 20 years and said it is the highlight of the year. He wants to gain knowledge from the adjudicators so he can teach improve his teaching skills and to get closer with his students.

"I hope to develop and even stronger bond with my students on the trip," Cleveland said. "I hope they come home with a really memorable experience."

Gusmano said these trips are beneficial because it allows the ensembles to hear how other schools perform so they can improve their work ethic and music. Seeing as it only happens every four years, prior to the trip senior Aiyana Badih was excited and unsure of what to expect.

"I want to make the most out of it with my friends and

performing in a festival because it's probably the last time I will ever really do that," Badih said.

Although the trip is centered on musical achievements, Cleveland said there are other positive experiences gained from attending Festival Disney.

"It helps them meet new people and friends they will come back with new friendships people they didn't even know before they went on the trip," Cleveland said. "It sets a very high musical goal for the year."

While on the trip, students got to walk around all the parks including: Disney's Animal Kingdom Theme Park, Disney's Hollywood Studios, Epcot and Magic Kingdom Park but Troost's favorite part of the trip was meeting new people from around the world and from North.

"The most memorable part was probably making new friends and hanging out with people," Troost said. "Usually I just stick with my band people but I got to hang out with a lot of orchestra people which was fun."



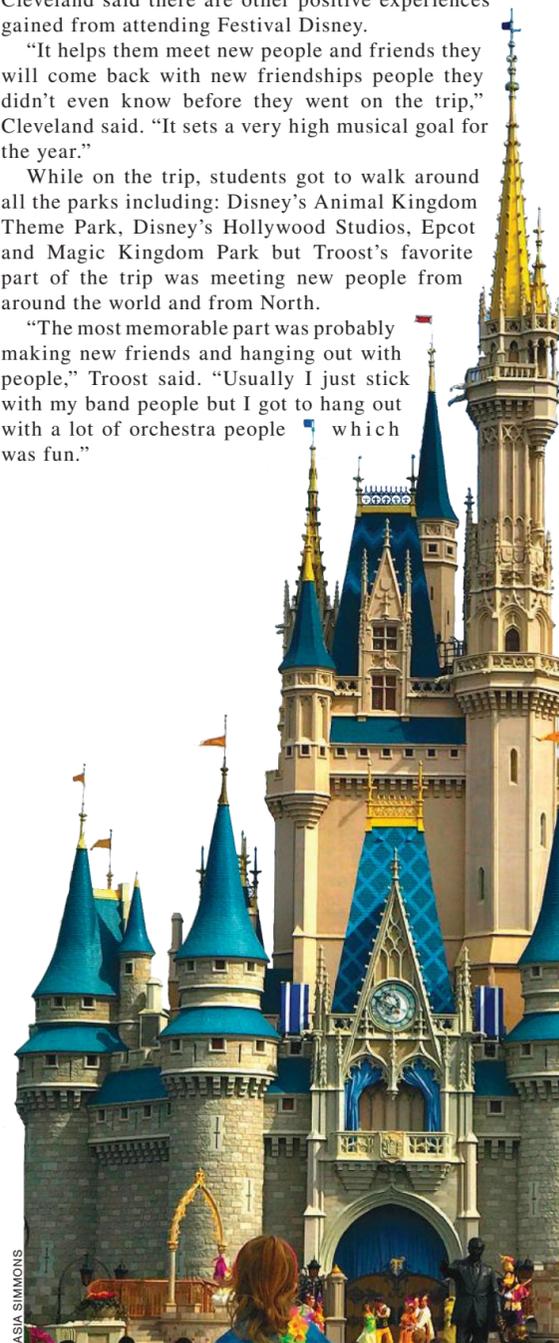
**PALMS AND MUSIC |** Orchestra members perform at Old Town amusement park in Kissimmee, Florida.

Band and orchestra played music from their Pops and Pastries Concert. "It teaches them a lot of life lessons: how to get organized on a trip, how to pack and it helps them meet new people and friends," band director David Cleveland said. "They will come back with new friendships, people they didn't even know before they went on the trip and it sets a very high musical goal for the year."



**MAIN STREET |** Alyssa Velasco, Audrey Rancourt, Charlotte Nicholson and Morgan Semack pose in front of the recreated Chinese Theater in Hollywood Studios.

"I think it will benefit me as a performer to see how other schools compete and how competitive it actually is around the nation," sophomore Charlotte Nicholson said.



ASA SIMMONS