

AN ANALYSIS OF BUSINESS PARTNERSHIPS
OF THE NATIONAL DECA ORGANIZATION


by


Rosanne T. White

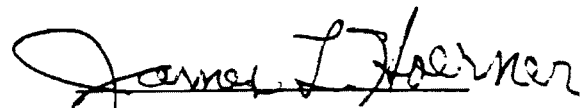
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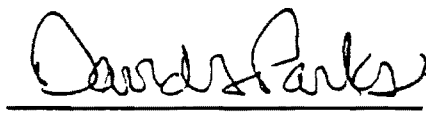
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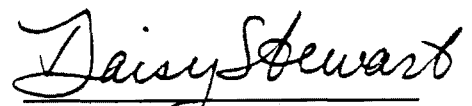
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(ABSTRACT)

The purpose of this study was to analyze 10 national corporations represented on the national business/industry advisory board of DECA, a national association of marketing education students. DECA's mission is to enhance the cocurricular education of students with interests in marketing, management, and entrepreneurship. DECA's National Advisory Board works directly with the association to influence its educational program that prepares students in career skills and job training. This study was designed to identify major factors, which contribute to successful business partnerships with this national association of marketing students. Upon conducting interviews with representatives of the 10 identified companies, the researcher found that the partnerships existed because each party received something. The companies gained present and future employees as a result of being able to recruit marketing students from DECA. Likewise, through the results of this study, it was determined by the researcher that DECA was able to link school and work through successful integrated education efforts nationwide. This undertaking resulted in building a responsive workforce preparation program. DECA also gained information about its National Advisory Board operations.

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Chapter I

Introduction to the Study

A partnership can be defined as an agreement between two organizations with a common goal to work together on mutually beneficial activities (Wass, 1995). Education and business are logical partners because together they can contribute to education reform. This partnership could be advantageous for business, labor, government, community organizations, and our nation's schools, but most importantly for our future workforce in order for others to be employable some day. When partners work in unison toward their mission, everyone benefits. Students find jobs and employers hire well-trained employees. Education and business partnerships can be the kind of union where both groups participate to transform our communities for the better.

One example of an education and business partnership is a mutually supportive arrangement between a business and a school or school district—often in the form of a written contract—in which the partners commit themselves to specific goals and activities to benefit students. Well-constructed partnerships between schools and businesses respond to concerns Americans feel about quality education by providing business energy and resources from the wider community so that schools are better equipped to succeed in educating all children (McDonnell, 1990).

DECA, known as Distributive Education Clubs of America, is not only a national association of marketing education students but also a vocational student organization, which strongly supports the need for such a collaboration. Because its mission is to enhance the cocurricular education of students with interests in marketing, management, and entrepreneurship, it provides a fitting foundation for a partnership with business and industry. A nonpartisan, nonsectarian, nonprofit organization of more than 180,000 student and faculty members, DECA serves as a companion student association for more than 6,000 marketing education programs in high schools and postsecondary schools in the United States, its territories, and Canada. This 50-year-old organization strives to create experiences where educators, students, and business representatives gain from interacting with each other. DECA's history of building partnerships with businesses at the national, state, and local levels is a prime example of this association's educational leadership.

DECA's National Advisory Board was created to strengthen the organization's relationship with corporate America. Volunteer business executives from nearly 50 major internationally known companies serve DECA by defining what business needs in the work force. In addition, they provide financial support to DECA, sponsor programs, provide student recognition and awards, offer scholarships, employ DECA student members, judge competitive events and provide other services as needed. Some of the companies represented are Coca-Cola USA; Winn-Dixie Stores, Inc.; J.C.

Penney Company, Inc.; Sears; Seven-Up USA; and Wal-Mart Stores, Inc. Overall, this board assists DECA with developing strategies on how it can increase the number of better prepared young people who are entering the marketing and business management profession.

DECA's National Advisory Board has recently developed two new programs. In 1995, DECA's State Business Partnership (SBP) program was created in conjunction with the National Retail Federation to link marketing education programs with state DECA associations, business community members, and trade associations. Activities ranged from providing business internships to targeting state economic funds for financing DECA projects. In 1996, at the invitation of the National Retail Institute of which the National Retail Federation is a branch, DECA's National Advisory Board collaborated with headquarters staff and the National Retail Institute to create national retail skill standards. The outcome provided skill standards as the foundation for implementing future curricula and programs.

Statement of the Problem

This study addresses what makes a successful partnership. The problem investigated by this researcher was why 10 major corporations on DECA's National Advisory Board developed their partnership with DECA. This study examined the reasons why these companies have a business partnership with DECA and how they benefit from the partnership.

Today's business-education partnerships mostly focus on student activities within individual programs or schools. Rarely do such partnerships encompass attempts to affect curricula, or the overall education basic skills acquisition process, (Clark, 1997). Such undertakings would be considered more global in nature than a single initiative but equally important. The partnerships between DECA and the companies represented on its National Advisory Board might be such an example.

Purpose of the Study

This study was designed to identify major factors, which contribute to successful business partnerships with a national association of marketing students. The companies considered for this study were suggested by the corporate development director of the national DECA staff who is responsible for coordinating the association's advisory board activities. Companies that were invited to participate in the study included Blockbuster Music; Dr. Pepper/Cadbury North America; Hardee's Food Systems; J.C. Penney Company, Inc.; Lechter's, Inc.; Marriott International; Otis Spunkmeyer, Inc.; Payless ShoeSource; Sears; T.J. Maxx/Marshalls; Toys "R" Us, Inc.; Wal-Mart Stores, Inc.; Winn-Dixie Stores, Inc.; and Woolworth Corporation. All were considered by DECA to be successful partnerships by the National DECA Board of Directors.

Significance

Because DECA desires growth in the number of its partnership programs demands for assistance and support from businesses and communities have increased. DECA and its Advisory Board participants need to make important decisions regarding the development, use, and management of DECA's programs. Through the efforts of this study, DECA gained valuable information about its National Advisory Board and how these partnerships help DECA meet its goals.

Research Question

The purpose of DECA's National Advisory Board is to work directly with DECA to influence its educational programs that prepare students in career skills and job training. Through this process partnerships are developed. The research questions which were investigated in this study were; are these partnerships successful, and if so, what makes a successful partnership?

Definition of Terms

For the purposes of this study the following definitions apply:

Advisory council - a group of individuals representing companies that will broaden the base of business support for relevant schooling and channel

industry and school resources toward solving mutual problems (National School Boards Association, 1991).

Career development - the process through which an individual comes to understand his or her place in the world of work (National School-to-Work Office, 1996).

Collaboration - a collection of community agencies, schools, and businesses organized to work together to “improve education” in the community (Virginia Business-Education Partnership Program, 1992).

Distributive Education Club of America (DECA) - an association of marketing students (Berns, 1996).

Education and business partnership - a mutually supportive arrangement between a business and a school or school district—often in the form of a written contract—where partners commit themselves to specific goals and activities to benefit students (McDonnell, 1990).

Marketing education - applying marketing competencies to real and simulated business situations to prepare students for successful marketing/business careers (DECA, 1995).

Mentoring - a supportive relationship between a youth or young adult and someone more senior in age and experience who offers support, guidance, and concrete assistance as the younger partner goes through a difficult period, enters a new area of experience, takes on an important task, or corrects an earlier problem(Reilly, 1992).

National Retail Federation - the largest retail trade organization in the United States (DECA, 1995). Its purpose is to promote issues important to the future of retailing.

On-the-job training - hands-on training in specific occupational skills that students receive as part of their workplace experiences (National School-to-Work Office,1996).

Partnership effectiveness - how well the partnership accomplishes its goals and benefits the participants it set out to serve (Merenda, 1991).

School-to-Work - an educational reform effort combining academic achievement with a graduated understanding of the world of work (National School-to-Work Office, 1996).

Standards - competencies of industry (or business) skills and knowledge (National Alliance of Business, 1996).

Vocational education - organized educational programs, services, and activities that prepare individuals for paid or unpaid employment, or for a career that does not require a baccalaureate or an advanced degree (National School-to-Work Office, 1996).

Vocational student organization - association that provides programs of career and leadership development, motivation, and recognition exclusively for middle school, high school, postsecondary, adult, and collegiate students enrolled in vocational education programs (National Coordinating Council for Vocational Student Organizations, 1990).

Limitations

The research was limited to those individuals who represented for this study the 10 identified companies of DECA's National Advisory Board. Those companies which were invited to participate included Blockbuster Music; Dr. Pepper/Cadbury North America; Hardee's Food Systems; J.C. Penney Company Inc.; Lechter's, Inc.; Marriott International; Otis Spunkmeyer, Inc.; Payless ShoeSource; Sears; Toys "R" Us, Inc.; T.J. Maxx/Marshalls; Wal-Mart Stores, Inc.; Winn-Dixie Stores, Inc.; and Woolworth Corporation. Each company had a designated employee who represents their company on the advisory board. They were contacted to

determine their interest in participating and who subsequently were interviewed.

Summary

This study consists of five chapters. The first chapter includes the introduction and outlines the purpose of the study. The next chapter presents a review of the general literature as it relates to the study. In the third chapter the methodology of the study is described. The following chapter is where the findings are presented. Included in the final chapter are conclusions, a discussion and recommendations.

Chapter II

Review of the Literature

The purpose of this chapter is to present a review of the relevant literature. The literature was divided into five sections. First, it described an education and business partnership. Second, it demonstrated the benefits of an education and business partnership to schools, communities, and industries and corporations. Third, the importance of collaboration was supported by the literature. Fourth, it presented current programmatic trends. Last, the literature explained the meaning and relevance of advisory councils in education and business partnerships.

A Description

Education and business have been linked since the late 1800s, as rapid industrial changes necessitated the creation of education programs and institutions that could respond to the changing needs of the workforce. In the late 1970s, when the term partnership became a popular expression and idea, the first partnership efforts were motivated largely by public relations concerns and the desire for corporations located in the same communities to be “good neighbors” (National Association of Partners in Education, 1994). Often partnerships of 20 years ago consisted solely of monetary contributions to schools from businesses for activity sponsorships or mostly for purchasing

educational or athletic equipment.

The National Association of Partners in Education (NAPE) reported that as a result of the publishing of *A Nation at Risk* in 1983, corporate America began to realize that their role in education needed to move beyond being a booster. The publication called for education reform and challenged all of society to take part. Business and industry supported this change because they saw a growing number of entry-level employees unprepared to meet the demands of new and complex jobs. As a result, education and business partnerships have developed throughout the country at a brisk rate. In a study prepared for the Committee for Economic Development, Timpane and McNeill (1991) found that by the end of the 1980s, broader economic developments and business concerns were complicating the program of educational reforms. The priority of business and the nation's economy was a pending recession.

Kane and Boverie (1995) found that currently corporations spend \$30 billion per year on formal or structured training programs and \$180 billion on informal training. Additionally, their research reported that "in the face of national demographic and economic realities, developing partnerships may soon become a practical necessity."

Wass (1995) addressed this necessity by explaining that education cannot respond to the changing needs of students preparing for life beyond formal education without the commitment and assistance of business, labor, government and community groups. In 1989, Merenda (1989) stated that

early volunteer efforts were the forerunners of what is known today as the partnership movement. He concluded that since 1983, the number of schools reporting partnerships has risen from 17% to 40% of all schools. By 1991 that number had increased to 51% (Merenda, 1991). Merenda's research indicated that nationwide partnership programs that existed in 1991 found 79% located in urban districts, 58% in suburban districts and only 45% in rural districts. The combined value of goods and services contributed by business partners was \$924,514,184. The number of volunteers involved with these programs in 1991 totaled 2,598,296 (Merenda, 1991).

The National Association of Partners in Education (NAPE, 1994) is regarded as the organization that represents and serves the schools, businesses, community groups, educators, and individual volunteers who work together as partners to help students achieve educational excellence. NAPE defines partnerships in education as collaborative effort between schools, school districts, and one or more community organizations to improve the academic and personal growth of America's youth. Businesses, government and community agencies, community clubs and organizations, foundations, colleges and universities, religious organizations, the media, health care agencies, labor organizations, and parent organizations might join in partnership to support school improvement and reform (Kranberg, 1993).

In November 1991, the National School District Partnership Survey was conducted in conjunction with NAPE. The results found that partnership programs were closely tied to the education goals of academic achievement

in the content subjects (Merenda, 1991). The research indicated that

- 31% of partnerships involved direct student support.
- 65% of the school districts with partnerships included improving achievement as an objective of their programs at the elementary level.
- 37% of the districts with partnerships included improved career awareness as an objective at the high school level.
- 39% of the high school level partnerships included career-related activities such as job shadowing and career day programs.
- 41% of all districts with partnership programs provided tutoring to students as one of their activities at the elementary level.
- 33% of partnerships were curriculum and instruction based.
- 22% of partnerships affected districtwide policy/program initiatives.

Asche and McGinley (1989), in collaboration with NAPE, developed a 12-stage process for creating education and business partnership programs:

1. Key populations should be informed by the school district that a partnership is being considered as a means of increasing the capacity of the local community to meet the needs of the students.
2. A needs assessment should take place that consists of gathering and interpreting information to formulate goals and objectives for the partnership program.
3. Program goals and objectives should be formulated.
4. Potential resources from within the community should be identified.

5. The partnership planning group should design the program.
6. The recruitment of volunteers should take place for those who will be implementing the partnership program.
7. An orientation process should take place to assist the volunteers in preparation for working within the school community.
8. Training should be provided to volunteers specific to the programs or activities of the partnership.
9. The volunteers should be assigned to the partnership program.
10. Those from within the school community should be involved with the partnership to cultivate the business representative for retention purposes.
11. A recognition program should be established to support everyone involved with the partnership.
12. On-going evaluations should be in place to assess the outcomes of the partnerships.

Stead and Eyring (1995) also established steps in developing a partnership program. First, prepare a statement of vision and goals. Second, analyze possible local businesses whose goals are similar with district goals. Third, draft a detailed proposal for a specific partner or business to address certain needs. Finally, prepare a partnership agreement.

Toubat (1994) summarized this topic by indicating that partnerships that are established based on specific goals and objectives are usually mutually beneficial. Partners who are team players and committed are more

likely to be successful than those lacking these factors. However, their importance differs based on the size of the businesses involved. The one factor that Toubat believes should remain at the top of the list, regardless of the size and type, are specific goals and objectives for the partnership.

Benefits

For an education and business partnership to be considered successful, it must be mutually beneficial for both the school or school district and its business partner. Mulkey stated that there must be consistent effort aimed at maintaining the relationship so that both groups continue to reap benefits. She stated that the program will not function properly unless it is motivated regularly. It takes effort from both parties to maintain successful, lasting relationships (Mulkey, 1995). Likewise, in 1987, Nancy S. Ancell, then-Chairman of the Board of Ethan Allen, Inc. wrote:

There is an increasing realization that it is neither desirable nor feasible for these two major social and economic forces (education and business) to exist in isolation. Both entities, and society as a whole, are benefiting from a recognition of common concerns, interests, and abilities.... From the perspective of those in business, partnerships are significant and must continue” (American Association of State Colleges and Universities, 1987, p.viii).

Prior to weighing the benefits of any possible partnership, Warwick

(1993) summarized what schools and businesses should expect from the partnership. As a result of a survey conducted in 1988, Warwick concluded that schools should expect from business partnerships involvement and commitment, financial support, curricula, guidance, skill sharing, and work experiences for their students. Businesses expectations from partnerships should include the desire to motivate students, reinforcement of basic skills, demonstration of relevant knowledge to teachers and students, and assistance with developing social and team building skills.

According to Richard Leshner, former president of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, in an education and business partnership, businesses should expect schools to provide greater emphasis on the basic skills. Leshner also indicated that schools should provide students with the ability to adapt to rapid change in our increasingly complicated and highly technical society. Schools should also provide learning opportunities outside the present formal education structure so students would be less isolated from the real world. Additionally, schools should provide an accountability for student results in a world of almost unlimited career opportunities (National School Public Relations Association, 1980).

The American Association of School Administrators (Lewis, 1986) recognized the benefits of education and business partnerships. AASA lists benefits for corporations as:

- A better understanding by young people of how the economy works and more appreciation of the private enterprise system.

- A better educated workforce.
- An improved image for the corporation.
- More social stability in neighborhoods where corporations produce or sell.
- Better informed consumers and voters.
- Lower costs when relocating in a state that provides free training to attract business.
- Vocational school training that is a better match for what employers need, using equipment similar to what employers use.
- Employee satisfaction from working with a company that provide positive benefit for communities.
- Bottom-line results in terms of productivity and product quality resulting from education and training improvements.

AASA listed benefits for education as:

- A broadened base for the support of an education system that is blamed increasingly for student shortcomings.
- Greater recognition of schools and what they contribute to business and the economy.
- Financial resources.
- Business people willing to come into the schools and help educate students about careers and training needs.
- Access to expensive, state-of-the-art equipment.

- Help with management problems.
- Support for appropriations and school bond drives.
- Experience for students that places priority on the role of experience in learning.
- Use of employer facilities and personnel for student instruction.
- Access to employers for job placement of graduates.
- Alternatives for imparting basic skills to students who are hard to teach in traditional settings.

During the 1995/96 school year, an education and business partnership program was established in Greene County, Tennessee, to link businesses, organizations, and institutions with the Greeneville and Greene County Schools (1995) to enhance and expand educational opportunities for all students. As a result of the program, benefits were identified for both the schools and their business partners. The participating schools benefited through an increased understanding of how the free enterprise system works, students were exposed to a variety of career choices and received hands-on experiences to prepare them for future employment, and teachers' curricula were enhanced from the increased technical and financial support. This partnership benefited businesses by influencing career choices of the students they were mentoring, better preparing entry level employees, heightening employee morale, developing better citizens, contracting out services to the

schools, improving local public relations, and receiving tax deductions for the goods and services provided.

Collaboration

A number of U.S. companies that are successful in the global marketplace attribute their prosperity to a corporate culture in which every individual is motivated to perform in a cooperative effort. U.S. educational leaders are now asking these companies to share their knowledge and experience (Nidds & McGerald, 1994). These statements are supported by Hodgkinson (1991) who wrote:

Social and economic conditions that affect children and young people continue to worsen, thereby increasing each student's difficulty in achieving a sound education. Schools cannot deal with these problems alone. Therefore, school boards and superintendents must encourage collaboration with individuals and community agencies that are related both directly and indirectly to the schools (p.20).

The National School Boards Association regards itself as taking the lead in promoting the importance of collaboration activities with individuals or agencies and community representatives (National School Boards Association, 1991). Published by the National School Boards Association is a reference from *The Business Roundtable Participation Guide: A Primer for*

Business on Education. It declares that “at a time when many families across all income levels are experiencing greater stress and when child poverty is at record levels, the school cannot view itself as an isolated institution within the community.” Businesses and schools have an equal responsibility to their community members.

According to a research study conducted by the U.S. Department of Education (Riley, 1994), many businesses that have been participating in education partnerships are now supporting the need for increasing family involvement in school reform. Companies sensitive to the need of collaborating with parents of school-age children often offer flextime to their employees, allowing them the flexibility to care for their children. Additionally, such companies might provide job-sharing or part-time employment. Many family-friendly companies provide child day care services on their premises or related parenting classes as benefits to their employees.

Hoyt (1991) explained that positive relationships between the private sector and educators can best be developed by taking advantage of the unique skills and knowledge that each has to offer. Hoyt continued by stating, “to the extent that educators and individuals from the private sector are to share responsibility for helping pupils, they must share authority and accountability” (p.451). This sharing process is regarded as collaboration.

The U.S. Department of Education (Belin, 1996) reported that in December 1995, business leaders from across the country met with U.S.

Secretary of Education Richard Riley in launching a national campaign for family-friendly policies in the workplace. Many business leaders who attended the meeting shared their company's successful partnership programs. A summary provided by Secretary Riley's office included:

- Marriott: Parent Resource Center and parenting information series, which provided employees with expert information on parenting, child care, and work/family issues.
- GTE Corporation: College Planning Seminar for Employees and their Families, which was a day-long interactive seminar transmitted via satellite that linked college admissions and financial planning experts with GTE employee families.
- Pizza Hut: Kids Hall of Fame program rewarded children ages 8-14, who made a difference in their family, school, and community with postsecondary scholarships.
- Hewlett-Packard: Flexible work hours were provided allowing employees to stagger their start time to accommodate their children's schedules and volunteer at the corporation's on-site elementary school.

Research from the U. S. Department of Education (Clark, 1992) has found that not enough is known from documentation of school/community partnerships to know if the concept and practice is maturing. Clark found that summaries compiled by researchers at major universities, research and evaluation firms, and corporations suggested that the primary elements of

many successful collaborations include a shared vision, equal commitment, a willingness to cross traditional institutional barriers, and a desire to be flexible within their partnership role.

Business and education with mutual interests are better served if they work together. Education requires political and economic support of the community of which business and industry are an essential part. Through collaboration with employers, schools can develop programs and services that fit the needs of the private sector (Northeast-Midwest Institute, 1988).

Program Trends

A review of the relevant literature revealed four general levels of involvement in education and business partnership programs: programmatic initiatives, financial support, policy implementations, and standards development. Asche (1993) validated this review by providing a summary description of each:

- Programmatic initiatives are those in which the partners work with schools to develop programs that target specific curriculum and/or student and teacher needs.
- Helping hands relationships are when the business partner provides the school with goods and services such as funding, tutors, mentors, speakers, equipment, and awards and incentives that encourage students to stay in school and strive for significant levels of achievement.

- Policy changes are planned and implemented as business leaders, educators, and community organizations work together to reduce bureaucratic rules and regulations; advocate proposed policy changes at the legislative level; lobby for changes in legislation and regulations; and follow through on these efforts to ensure that these changes are supported through adequate financing and programs.
- Alliances, compacts, and community coalition efforts are joint efforts between several businesses and/or community organizations and one or several schools or school districts. Such collaboration efforts might produce major changes in curricula and reorganization of school governance.

Programmatic Initiatives

Levine and Trachtman (1988) wrote “Programmatic interactions between public and private sectors reflect shared responsibilities, trust, and cooperation” (p.175). Such examples of this interaction range from school board participation to advisory or collaborative councils. The National Association of Partners in Education also indicated a wide range of partnership program opportunities. NAPE recognized partners in the classroom as those who improved the learning environment by bringing their business or occupational expertise; provided teacher training and development assisting the faculty with opportunities to update, upgrade, or

maintain their skills; or participated in special services of short-term or student-specific activities or resources (NAPE, 1994).

Throughout the nation in almost any community, education and business partnerships are taking place. Three of the most popular programs are mentoring programs, on-the-job training, and adopt-a-school programs.

Mentoring is a supportive relationship between a youth or a young adult and someone more senior in age and experience who offers support, guidance, and concrete assistance as the younger partner goes through a difficult period, enters a new area of experience, takes on an important task, or corrects an earlier problem (Reilly, 1992). Just as a successful corporate executive often has a mentor in his or her background who has been an example or acted as a sponsor, so too have successful students been advised or inspired by a mentor (Evans, 1992).

On-the-job training is hands-on training in specific occupational skills that students receive as part of their workplace experiences (National School-to-Work Office, 1996). In 1994, President Bill Clinton enacted into federal legislation the School-to-Work Opportunities Act. This program is an integrated school-based and work-based learning program that integrates academic and occupational learning and links school and employment between secondary and postsecondary education (National School-to-Work Office, 1996). It is becoming commonplace for the term on-the-job training

to be used simultaneously with the terminology of the School-to-Work program.

Adopt-a-school is when a company or community organization sponsors a school in the form of fiscal, material, or human resource contributions. Adopt-a-school efforts may take a number of forms including equipment donations, speakers, mentors and tutors, seminars, receptions or activity sponsors, letters of support, scholarship and grants, company tours, and employment opportunities (National School-to-Work Office, 1996).

At Lowe's Grove Middle School in Durham, North Carolina, the mentoring of its students by local business representatives is common practice (Bunting, 1994). In a partnership with Weck Industry, a local producer of endoscopic surgical tools, educators at this middle school developed a program that includes mentoring, tutoring, and shadowing. Seeking to enhance the curricula, the educators capitalized on the skills of Weck's trained engineers who have a practical knowledge of math and science, worked with Weck's executives who brought experiences as a result of their diverse travel and interests, benefited from Weck's skill technicians who were able to model educational and citizenship values, and had the use of a state-of-the-art facility available to them for use in teaching. At the conclusion of the first year of this partnership, the Lowe's Grove Middle School faculty and staff, and Weck employees agreed that the program was beneficial. They felt they were contributing to their community. The teachers observed improved morale of the students who had participated in the

program (Bunting, 1994) and associated it with the mentoring of tutoring that they received.

Bassinger (1994) wrote of another example of a successful mentoring program, the PAYBAC program (Partners Assisting Youth, Business, and Community) in the Millard Public Schools in Omaha, Nebraska. The concept for this program was created in 1989 when the new school superintendent expressed a desire to strengthen the communication link between the school district and businesses involved in school-business partnership programs. The PAYBAC business partners primary concern was that the students lacked the necessary skills to successfully complete a job interview. As a result, the PAYBAC partners and school staff members developed a unit on how to complete job applications, develop resumes, and prepare for interviews. The students who had participated in the PAYBAC program had taken advantage of the mentoring skills offered to them by members of their local business community.

An on-the-job training program has taken place in Alexandria, Virginia, since 1993. Known as the Landmark Career Academy of the Fairfax County Public Schools, this alternative high school program operates at a local shopping mall. The academy's purpose is to combine academic learning with real-world work experiences. Students at the academy complete the necessary course work for a high school diploma while developing marketable employment skills (Canny, 1996). This program is a partnership between the Fairfax County Public Schools; Training for Retail and

Commerce (TRAC/USA), a private organization that helps fund School-to-Work programs; and Landmark Mall. The school system provides the necessary teachers and curriculum; TRAC/USA provides training in employment skills and arranges student internships at businesses in or near the mall; and the owners of Landmark Mall provide a 4,500 square-foot facility for the program charging the school system \$1 in rent a year. The students attending the academy have earned better grades overall than they did at their traditional high schools. Even when this program was still in its early stages, all partners who were involved considered it a success.

Not all on-the-job training programs were created for students. In 1992 in Dayton, Ohio, the Dayton-Montgomery County Public Education Fund Mathematics Collaborative (Farrell, 1992) sponsored 18 educators in a summer internship program. This collaborative effort was made up of a sponsorship of school and university mathematics educators, administrators, executives, engineers, and scientists. During their summer vacation, the selected math and science teachers spent several weeks working in local industries with engineers, materials scientists, marketing analysts, environmental consultants, physicists, and other industry personnel. The teachers worked along side specialists working on projects and gained knowledge and applications that they could take back to their classrooms.

Bill Gates, CEO of Microsoft, wrote about an adopt-a-school program between Bell Atlantic and Christopher Columbus Middle School in Union City, New Jersey, that received national attention (Gates, 1995). This middle

school served a school population based in a school district with a high dropout rate, very low test scores and where 90 percent of its students did not speak English as a first language. Gates described how Bell Atlantic had agreed to develop a special networked, multimedia system of personal computers linking the students' homes with the classrooms, teachers, and school administrators. Two years following the partnership implementation, parents of the students who participated in the program were actively involved with their child's home computer and communicated with the school, the dropout rate and the absenteeism were both nearly zero, students were scoring nearly three times higher than the average for all New Jersey inner-city schools on standardized tests, and the program was expanded to include the entire middle school.

In Kingsport, Tennessee, an adopt-a-school program called Putting Children First had been established by four local school systems and Eastman Chemical Company (American Vocational Association, 1994). This program was established to help the school systems emphasize science, math, technology, and communication in their curricula. The basis of this undertaking was a substitute teacher program where 30 Eastman retirees and active employees volunteered as substitute teachers for regular classroom instructors who were away for short-term staff development training. The substitutes had degrees in the subject areas they were teaching and had been oriented by the Kingsport school system. The local school superintendent and the principals supported the program because they had limited resources

allowing teachers to be out of the classrooms attending necessary in-service training.

Financial Support

Eugene M. Lang is the president of REFAC Corporation, a company that develops new technologies into commercial ventures. Raised in Harlem, Lang realized early in life that education was his only chance of overcoming poverty. Lang has donated millions of dollars to education and has often been regarded as the best-known mentor in America (Evans, 1992). Lang's I Have A Dream Foundation provides thousands of at-risk high school students who might otherwise never have the means to pursue higher education the possibility of college tuition. Lang believed in investing dollars into education.

Green (1995) reported that according to the Corporate Philanthropy Report, businesses gave \$39 million to support precollege education programs in 1981. Ten years later, the amount had risen to \$316 million. However, Green declared that although the amount of corporate financial contributions had greatly increased, so had the frustration levels of business leaders who do not feel that school reform is taking place and that their contributions were making a difference.

In 1989, MacDowell determined that "the funds are flowing from the private sector to public school districts in ever-increasing amounts" (MacDowell, 1989, p.8). He pointed out that in the late 1970s, the ARCO

Foundation contributed practically all of its education dollars to colleges and universities. Since then, ARCO has contributed more than half of its corporate giving dollars (\$11.5 million) to precollege programs. Likewise, MacDowell had found other large corporations had made substantial contributions to similar programs throughout the nation. The Amoco Foundation contributed 15% of its \$22.5 million, the BellSouth Foundation reported a contribution pledge of \$1.63 million, and the Firestone Trust Fund had given a \$3 million grant to help at-risk students in and around Akron, Ohio.

Kranendock (1992) summarized that IBM committed more than \$77 million between 1989 and 1991 to education through monetary contributions, equipment, and technical support. Kranendock, an IBM manager, stated that:

IBM believes the quality of education has a direct effect on the ability of the company, its customers, and suppliers, to have and maintain a competitive workforce. IBM works to support and enrich educational experiences for students and teachers (p.29).

Additionally, IBM substantially supported vocational education programs nationwide, specifically through partnerships and by giving contributions to vocational and technical schools and school districts.

Not all monetary contributions from businesses to schools must be as large as IBM's corporate giving program to be effective. Oakes and Thomas (1991) explained that the school superintendent of Santa Ana (California) Unified School District, Rudy Castruita, encouraged interaction with local

businesses to gain monetary contributions. Within this school district, students and teachers benefited from smaller corporate gifts such as a computer corporation donating seven \$250 scholarships, which are awarded to high school students. Another company donated \$11,000 of teaching materials for use in primary language development and second-language acquisition programs. Oakes and Thomas confirmed that these kinds of sponsorship of students' efforts are a validation of both the school's and the students' worth to the community.

Boardman (1990) supported Oakes and Thomas's findings as he wrote about Minot High School in Minot, North Dakota. Boardman, Minot's media specialist, advocated that a fiscal contribution as small as \$400 could make an impact because that amount, for example, was donated by a local credit union to purchase 18 magazine subscriptions for the school. In addition, Boardman pointed out that for \$1,000, a business could replace a set of encyclopedias, buy a video-cassette recorder, or hire an aide to clear a backlog of typing and filing whereby the professional librarian is then available to work directly with students and teachers. She believed that "small donations can have a powerful impact on the instructional program" (Boardman, 1990, p.43).

Funk (1991) declared that:

"The true cost of education is not merely the \$310 billion paid in taxes annually, but also the added expense that the private sector incurs in raising the skill level of workers.... The message is

clear: if you [education] don't provide adequate training and skills the first time, it will result in increased costs later" [to labor] (p.19).

Business finds itself increasingly bearing the burden of remedially training its own employees, a cost the American Society for Training and Development conservatively has estimated at \$30 billion annually (Funk, 1991). The matter of corporations contributing to school districts and education programs is basically "pay now or pay later."

Policy Implementation

Partnerships have moved from the project to the policy-making level. Policy interests have moved from narrow to broad perspectives, from an emphasis on vocational skills for students to improving the professional environment of the teaching profession. The 1986 National Governors Association's Report on Education indicated that "if schools are to improve, the wider public must be involved to tap and focus energy and commitment" (Lewis, 1986, p.14). Business people have looked at this issue from the standpoint of employers and realized that the work environment for teachers need to change if schools are to get and keep qualified personnel.

Along that same theory, Waddock (1994) reported to the National Alliance of Business in 1994 that regarding public policy initiatives in education, business should:

- advocate and pressure for reform initiatives.

- place an emphasis on school choice.
- insist on national education standards.
- work with key stakeholder groups to achieve systematic reform.
- focus on curriculum content, methods, and structure.
- enhance school performance.

Lund (1988,p.5) believed that:

Corporations want to make a difference in education by creating a new vision of business/school partnerships that move beyond the current pleasant, but at times too fragmented, efforts that sow short-term gains but fail to reap long-term educational change. Our nation's corporations want to make a difference in public education.

Perhaps this is the reason why many businesses want school reform and become involved in policy-making matters.

Paul M. Ostergard, Citibank N.A. Vice President, advocated the need for businesses to form strong local education partnerships before undertaking any reform issues. Ostergard stated that a few big companies and business associations have found it tempting to pursue school reform through legislative means in Washington, DC, or in state capitals. However, the real victories in school reform today are being won on a school-by-school basis. A starting point for companies eager to undertake partnerships with inner-city schools can be underwriting initiatives aimed at empowering

parents and teachers who are ready to work for change (Ostergard, 1990).

Shannon (1991) agreed with Ostergard's philosophy by suggesting that business people run for local school boards. According to Shannon, then-Executive Director of the National School Boards Association:

It is part of the cherished tradition of the American institution of representative governance of public education. School boards employ the superintendent to implement board policy and recommend new initiatives. They evaluate all programs of the school district and they generally exercise policy control of the community's schools within the board constraints of state and federal law (p.11).

Nidds and McGerald (1995) surveyed Fortune 500 chief executive officers to gain their opinions on educational outcomes and practices. Their research concluded that CEOs supported educational restructuring and believed that there was a need for dramatic changes in how schools prepare students for the globally oriented workplace of the 21st century. They also felt that teachers in the next century must incorporate techniques of cooperative learning, while recognizing and using individual and cultural differences. Those surveyed summarized that education must follow the lead of corporate America.

In 1990, a task force of the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD) established guidelines for business

involvement in the schools. The guidelines established ground rules for structuring business involvement in education policy making. ASCD proposed that business involvement should be reviewed to ensure that it is consistent with ASCD's educational values. Secondly, a well-defined process should be put in place at the district level to ensure that the proposed involvement:

1. Is consistent with the values, goals, and objectives of the educational program.
2. Responds to a clearly understood educational need.
3. Supports and does not undermine, either implicitly or explicitly, an existing curriculum and instruction message.
4. Has been considered and assessed by groups with different views.
5. Provides for an ongoing review of all school-business relationships (p.84).

This task force continued to report in ASCD's journal, *Educational Leadership*, that businesses as institutions are perhaps the largest and most powerful interest group in our society. As such, they can exert considerable influence over social and educational policy. The development of ASCD's guidelines for business involvement in education was a policy method to promote students' welfare. Most importantly, ASCD confirmed that involving business people does not mean that the business agenda can or should become the school agenda (Association for Supervision and

Curriculum Development, 1989/90).

Chubb and Moe (1990) held the opinion that business was genuinely interested in discovering the true causes of poor educational performance and in identifying whatever changes in structure and practice might promise significant improvement. Unlike the established education or long-time partnership players, the business community had strong incentives to take a “coldly analytical approach” to the problem, but instead needed to acquire the best possible knowledge about why the problem of poor educational performance existed and what could be done to develop solutions. Chubb and Moe also suggested that an evaluation take place of the full range of policy and institutional options for education and business when they considered these solutions.

Standards Development

A recent poll conducted by Gallup, Cable News Network, and USA Today of 1,000 Americans on the eve of the 1996 presidential campaign found that 67% said that education was a “top priority” or a “high priority” among a list of national issues. Of those surveyed, 44% stated that the quality of education in public schools was so important that they were choosing which candidate to support for president based upon the candidate’s position on education issues (National Alliance of Business, 1996).

This priority was also on the agenda of the National Governors Association’s 1996 National Education Summit as a recent discussion took

place on business and industry's involvement in education standards. The governors declared:

As governors, we commit to the development and establishment of internationally competitive academic standards, assessments to measure academic achievement, and accountability systems in our states, according to each state's governing structure, within the next two years. For this purpose, we agree to the reallocation of sums sufficient to support implementation of those standards within a clear timetable for a full implementation. Such funds should be available for the essential professional development, infrastructure, and new technologies needed to meet these goals.

In response to this declaration, the business leaders present proclaimed:

As business leaders, we commit to actively support the work of the governors to improve student performance and to develop coalitions of other business leaders in our states to expand this support. As such, we will clearly communicate to students, parents, schools, and the community the types and levels of skills necessary to meet the workforce needs of the next century and implement hiring practices within one year that will require applicants to demonstrate academic achievement through

school-based records. We commit to considering the quality of a state's academic standards and achievement levels as a high priority factor in determining location decisions. We also agree to adopt policies to support parental involvement in their children's education and in improving their local school (p.5).

USA Today (1997) reported that one year after this summit both governors and business leaders stated that academic standards were rising, employers were examining school records, and company rules were more parent friendly. Of the 49 original participating companies, 22 now have a process in place to review high school academic performance as a part of their hiring decisions for entry-level job applicants.

Under the leadership of The Business Roundtable, the Committee for Economic Development, and the National Alliance of Business, 11 national business organizations saw the need to improve American schools in 1989 and created the Business Coalition for Education Reform task force. This coalition developed nine principles to serve as a guide for the process of setting standards:

1. All students should be given the opportunity to master challenging academic subject matter calibrated against world-class education standards.
2. There must be one set of standards for all students.
3. Standards must have a common core of skills.

4. Standards must reflect “real world” requirements.
5. Standards must be voluntary.
6. Standards must be dynamic.
7. Standards must include criteria against which performance is measured.
8. Business leaders must have a “seat at the table.”
9. Standards and performance measures must be understood and supported by parents and the general public (National Alliance of Business, 1995, pp. 6-11).

This task force, known as the Business Task Force on Student Standards, added to these nine principles that “education standards must encourage the kind of productive work habits and sense of self-responsibility in school that will be required on the job and in life. If young people leave school with 12 years of low expectations, shoddy work, and minimal performance, their future prospects as citizens and workers can only be grim”(National Alliance of Business, 1995, p.ii).

Linder-Scholer (1996) on behalf of the Triangle Coalition for Science and Technology Education recognized a current national movement for standards-based systematic education reform. Linder-Scholer wrote:

It is important to understand that the movement toward content standards has been accompanied in many states by an interest in redefining the basic paradigm for kindergarten through grade 12 education. This initiative is the moving away from our current

model and toward a performance-based program organized around standards. The challenge for businesses interested in supporting this standards-based change will require new forms of corporate behavior and education involvement.

Rist (1990) summarized this matter:

“Where schools clearly are falling short of accomplishing their mission, the private sector already is coming up with solutions of its own. Convinced schools should be more competitive, more accountable, and more driven by the needs of the market they serve, corporate America is changing the shape of school-business partnerships. Whether the new look is more like a hostile takeover or a productive merger is up to education”(p.25).

Advisory Councils

Levine and Trachtman (1988) defined a collaborative council as a mechanism for establishing communication across the business/education/labor sectors over an extended period. Council membership should be representative of major sectors of a community, with each having served as an equal partner in the effort. Improving the School-to-Work transition as well as the more general upgrading of education was the goal. Although these writers defined a collaboration council, the same definition could be used to describe an advisory council for

a local, state, or national level education and business partnership initiative.

The involvement of the business community with education at the state level has expanded in recent years to include nearly every state in the country. Lewis (1986) provided four examples:

1. A group of corporate CEOs and leading educators, brought together through the California Roundtable, put their weight behind a major education reform package in the state and helped acquire more than \$900 million in new money to fund the program.

2. The Colorado Employability Skills Project, a cooperative effort of the state department of education and the business community, helped to pinpoint the skills businesses say they need in high school graduates and then worked to ensure students have those skills.

3. Indiana Partners in Education, launched by Governor Robert Orr in 1984, offered training and consultation to communities that desired to establish partnership programs.

4. Businesses in New York State reached out to help teachers renew their skills during the summer. Created by the state legislature, the Teacher Summer Business Training and Employment Program reimbursed 30 percent of the wages and associated benefits, up to \$1,000 per teacher, to businesses or industries that hired teachers.

In 1973, the National School Public Relations Association developed guidelines for establishing business advisory committees within education

and business partnerships. This association claimed that:

Advisory committees at the state level may serve to regenerate state departments as education leaders strive to overcome a credibility gap of increasing proportions. Much of the revitalizing may come via formal state advisory committees or the increased involvement of citizens in accountability and assessment studies.

Although these recommendations are almost 25 years old, the same statements could be applied today.

The National Association for Industry-Education Cooperation (1980) defined the functions and features of an advisory committee, or council. A partnership's council:

- Is a mechanism that should broaden the base of corporate support for relevant schooling and channel industry and school resources toward the solution of mutual problems.
- Should bring all educational resources within a community together.
- Should serve as a continuous forum for representatives of industry and education to discuss mutual issues.
- Should promote and encourage communication and cooperation between industry and schools and help to improve the total educational program.

- Should mobilize the key resources of a community, develop plans for their efficient allocation, and provide a greater opportunity to achieve program objectives.
- Should offer industry an opportunity to ensure that tomorrow's adults will be equal to their challenges and opportunities; that they will appreciate and understand their responsibilities as citizens, be competent in managing their own affairs, and successful in their chosen careers.
- Should offer educators an opportunity to strengthen the instructional effort at all levels of education through an applied approach to concepts and principles that relate classroom teaching to the world of work and career fields, and to develop and maintain curricula relevant to current and anticipated employment opportunities.

According to the National Association of Partners in Education (1986), an advisory council should establish overall policies and define objectives of the program, encourage supportive community organizations and individuals to provide volunteers for the services needed, obtain funds to finance the program, guide and assist the program's coordinator; and report on the progress of the program. Additionally, NAPE suggested that the members of the advisory council be informed, concerned citizens who represent a wide variety of community interests.

The American Association of School Administrators provided advice

on what councils should avoid to remain effective. Specifically, they should not make decisions that violate school board policy; try to take on the role of principal, superintendent, or school board; or venture beyond the limits of their expertise or their assignments (Lucas, 1994). AASA proposed five steps for effective council operations that included planning, assessment, goal setting, strategy development, and evaluation.

Johnson (1996) supported the AASA recommendations regarding advisory councils. For the Washington, DC, Council of Agencies, Johnson explained that:

Advisory councils are special categories of volunteers. Clear expectations are imperative. It needs to be defined exactly what the role of the advisory group is and is not. Most advisory councils have an impact through influence and persuasion, rather than through decision making authority (p.28).

However, Johnson advised that an advisory council should be utilized if it is available.

Summary

Perhaps C. William Day (1994) best summarized the need for partnerships between education and business. As senior analyst for KBD Planning Group in Bloomington, Illinois, he wrote:

Business and schools have a common bond, our children, and each have a responsibility to prepare our children for their entry

into the world of work. Partnerships allow schools access to outside organizations, facilities, materials, and personnel, which are used to help address particular educational problems. Much as schools need financial support, dollars are not their only crucial need. They also require information about the skills they should be teaching students, specific information that industry should make more readily available. Business and school partnerships are limited only by the imagination of the participants. Doors are wide open for building mutual understanding between the schools and the business community (p.26).

Almost 15 years ago, the National Alliance of Business published a statement that true and meaningful partnerships, through formal and informal links, are needed and wanted. Furthermore, NAB supported its belief that if education and business are to work together, their partnerships must be based on trust, respect, commitment, and a framework for cooperation (National Alliance of Business, 1984). The same statements could be made today because the need for education and business partnerships still exist. The literature presented in this chapter supported the need for such partnerships, as educators and business representatives were recognized for their contributions to this significant movement.

Chapter III

Methodology

This was an analysis of 10 national DECA business partnerships. The data analysis consisted of more words than numbers since this was a qualitative study. According to Miles and Huberman (1994), qualitative research is conducted through an intense and prolonged contact with a field or life situation. They continued by stating that the researcher's role is to gain a holistic overview of the context under study: its logic, arrangements, and explicit and implicit rules.

In their book, *Theory and Concepts in Qualitative Research*, Flinders and Mills (1993) wrote that qualitative program evaluation has often been compared to storytelling. "The stories told can be richly textured, enlightening accounts of the meaning and significance of a given program as experienced and understood by various stakeholders" (p.40). The researcher suspected that such stories could be told by the representatives of DECA's National Advisory Board.

There had never been a research study conducted on DECA's National Advisory Board; therefore, data were not available as to why the companies had these partnerships. Additionally, it was not known if these partnerships were considered successful by the represented companies.

Selection Process

DECA's National Advisory Board consisted of more than 50 volunteer members. Most of these members represented major internationally known corporations. The purpose of this advisory board was to strengthen DECA's relationship with corporate America and to assist it in identifying what businesses needed in the work force, especially in the retail industry.

Some of the companies represented on DECA's National Advisory Board were:

- Blockbuster Music
- Coca-Cola USA
- Dr. Pepper/Cadbury North America
- F.W. Woolworth Company
- Ford Motor Company
- Hardee's Food Systems, Inc.
- Kinney Shoe Corporation
- Kmart Corporation
- J.C. Penney Company, Inc.
- Lechter's, Inc.
- Marriott International
- Nine West Group, Inc.
- Payless ShoeSource
- Sears
- Seven-Up USA

- Sunglass Hut International, Inc.
- T.J. Maxx/Marshalls
- Thom McAn Shoe Company
- Toys “R” Us, Inc.
- Wal-Mart Stores, Inc.
- Winn-Dixie Stores, Inc.

Positioned on the national staff of the DECA organization was a full-time employee, the corporate development director, who coordinated DECA’s National Advisory Board’s program of activities. At the time of this study, this individual had been employed with DECA for 13 years in a variety of managerial positions. Upon this employee’s recommendation, 14 companies were selected from DECA’s National Advisory Board for this study. Each selection was based upon a commitment to serving on DECA’s National Advisory Board. Although some of the identified companies had been represented on this board longer than others, in the opinion of DECA’s corporate development director, their level of commitment to the organization was equal and were considered to be successful partnerships.

Ten corporate representatives of DECA’s National Advisory Board were the number of subjects desired for this study. Fourteen companies were invited to participate, which allowed room for attrition should any of the invited companies choose not to participate or had to withdraw. Upon completion of this study, 10 companies had participated from the original 14

invitees. One company chose not to participate in the study because it was against corporate policy for employees to participate in research studies on behalf of the company. Three other individuals did not participate due to time constraints. The specific representatives of these 3 companies had scheduling conflicts during this study's data collection stage and subsequently were unavailable.

In selecting the companies which were included in the study, DECA's corporate development director based the selection on the length of time that each company was represented on this advisory board. Three of the companies had a tenure of more than 25 years, 3 had a tenure between 10 and 25 years, and 3 were represented on this advisory board for under 10 years.

Participants

An employee from each of the 10 identified companies participated in this study. Each of these employees was the individual who served as their specific company representative on DECA's National Advisory Board. The following corporations had representatives participate, and all were active members at the time of this study:

1. Wal-Mart Stores
2. Hardee's Food Systems
3. J.C. Penney Company, Inc.
4. Winn-Dixie Stores, Inc.
5. Lechter's, Inc.

6. Otis Spunkmeyer, Inc.
7. Payless ShoeSource
8. Sears
9. Anonymous company
10. Anonymous company

Eight companies were listed by name. Two companies wished to be anonymous for this study. The names of the corporate representatives who participated in this study were withheld. Their roles varied from vice presidents to national sales managers to human resources directors. Their personal tenure on DECA's National Advisory Board averaged approximately 3 years.

For reporting purposes, the results from the representative's interviews and related data collection were categorized by statements made by the interviewees that were consistently given in response to each of the interview questions. A summary table format was used to present the statements made by the interviewees during the interviews with the researcher. A coding identification system was established to identify the responses of each of the interviewees and to identify themes and patterns. Profiles of each of the participating companies are found in Appendix C.

Research Instrument

Structured telephone interviews were conducted to obtain the necessary data for this study. Additional data were collected when the

investigator reviewed corporate annual reports of the identified companies.

All of the interviews were audio recorded with prior approval from the interviewees. The corporate representatives who were interviewed were asked to respond to questions about their partnership with DECA in relation to their advisory board involvement. The interviews were to determine if the corporate representative considered the partnership successful, and if so, why. Each of those who were interviewed received a typed transcript of their interview. They reviewed the copy for accuracy and released the data for this study. The consent form is found in Appendix A. Two representatives released the data, but corporate policies prevented the identity of their company from being known.

The interviewees were provided with the same questions prior to being interviewed. These questions were designed as anchors to guide the interviews. Glesne and Peshkin (1992) wrote:

The questions that you ask must fit your topic: the answers they elicit must illuminate the phenomenon of inquiry. And the questions you ask must be anchored in the cultural reality of your respondents: the questions must be drawn from the respondents' lives (p.25).

A pilot interview was conducted on one of the corporate representatives from DECA's National Advisory Board. The purpose of the pilot interview was to field test the questions and to receive comments from

the interviewee about the quality of the questions. The data from the pilot interview were included into the final analysis of this study.

The anchor questions used during the 10 interviews were:

1. What is DECA? How would you describe it to someone who knows nothing about it? What is DECA's National Advisory Board?

2. In your opinion, why is your company represented on DECA's national advisory board? Why is it continuing its partnership? How does your company benefit from this partnership?

3. How do you communicate your involvement (your company) with DECA to your local affiliates/stores?

4. If you could design the perfect partnership between a corporation and DECA what elements would be included?

5. What is your perception of how students are being prepared for marketing careers as a result of a partnership with DECA?

6. What have been some recent outcomes as a result of your company having this representation on DECA's National Advisory Board? Do you have any related data or feedback from your local affiliates?

The researcher wanted more spontaneous responses, therefore the following additional questions were asked during each of the interviews but these questions were not provided in advance.

1. How do you feel this partnership has been maintained by DECA? What has been done well? Where could DECA improve?

2. If there was a company joining DECA's National Advisory Board today, what advice would you give its representative to make a successful partner? How could a company get the most from the investment of its resources?

3. If you had to choose only one word to summarize your partnership with DECA by serving on its advisory board, what would it be?

4. Is there anything else that you would like to share in relation to this study? Anything that you feel is important for [the researcher] to know?

In addition to the structured telephone interviews between the investigator and the representatives of the DECA National Advisory Board, several personal interviews were held between the investigator and DECA's corporate development director. Those discussions were recorded, a transcript was provided, reviewed for accuracy, and released for the study by DECA's corporate development director. No questions were provided prior to these personal interviews. The content of those interviews dealt mostly with gathering factual information about the identified companies that were included in this study. DECA's corporate development director also was asked to explain why he considered the partnerships successful.

Spradley (1979) explained case study interviews. "It is best to think of case study interviews as a series of friendly conversations into which the researcher slowly introduces new elements to assist informants to respond as informants" (p.60). He continued by stating, "Standard qualitative designs

call for the persons most responsible for interpretations to be in the field, making observations, exercising subjective judgment, analyzing and synthesizing, all the while realizing their own consciousness” (p.41).

Treatment of the Data

Once the data were collected and transcribed, the researcher found it necessary to analyze the data. The researcher wanted to determine if consistent themes were present throughout the data.

Upon reviewing each of the interview transcripts, the researcher assigned one word or a small group of words to the responses from each of the questions. For instance, when asked to define DECA, the researcher reviewed the answers from each participant to find a common definition. For that particular question, the researcher concluded from the transcripts that the words “student organization” were consistently appearing in the responses. The researcher assigned a theme for the answer to that question, and did so with each additional question.

Using colored marking pens for the purpose of coding the assigned themes to various categories, the researcher highlighted in color similar themes from transcript to transcript. The same responses from each of the questions were coded in the same color. This system provided colored coding treatment of the data.

Summary

The purpose of this chapter was to provide a description of the methodology used to obtain data for the study. The data collection methods were explained. The population selection process was described. The research instrument was presented and the framework of how the research phase of the study was to be conducted. Lastly, treatment of the data was described.

Chapter IV

Findings

The purpose of this chapter is to present the results of the study. The collected material is presented to the reader in a tabular format and descriptive text.

The researcher conducted structured interviews with each of the 10 corporate representatives of DECA's National Advisory Council and is presenting the outcome of those interviews as an analysis. During each of the interviews, the researcher asked 6 questions, which had been provided to the interviewees in advance. Additionally, 4 other questions were asked by the researcher that had not been provided prior to the interviews.

A summary table format is used to present the statements made by the interviewees. The statements made by the interviewees that were consistently given in response to each of the 10 questions were categorized and appear to the left side of each summary table. The first question had 2 parts and subsequently the findings appear separately. A summary table is provided for each question and any related supporting questions.

A code list was developed to identify the responses from each of the interviewees. The same coding was used throughout the data presentation. To protect the identity of the corporate representatives, each of them were assigned a number. For example, the representative from the Hardees Food Service, might have been assigned the number 7, and therefore would be

referred to in the study as Participant #7. The code list for the participants is found in Appendix B. Listed in Appendix C are profiles of each of the represented corporations.

The summary tables indicate that some informants did not respond to each of the questions or had a response that did not fit into one of the identified categories. The summary tables also reflect the categorized responses according to who gave a response and to what question they responded. Those responses appear to the right side of each summary table.

Each summary table is supported with descriptive text that expands on the responses from the interviewees. The descriptive text provides more complete answers to the researcher's questions. The descriptive text also includes direct quotations from the actual interviews. Following the summary tables and the accompanying descriptive text, the researcher provides additional information found as a result of the study.

Summary of Interviews with 10 Corporate Representatives

Research Question 1a

What is DECA?

The researcher wanted to determine the interviewees knowledge of DECA and its National Advisory Board. Did they have a similar definition of the DECA organization and of its advisory board? DECA is defined by the organization as a national association of marketing education students. Its National Advisory Board exists to work directly with DECA to influence its education program which prepares students in career skills and job training.

Perhaps Participant #6 of the J.C. Penney Company used terminology for DECA which was most like the official definition. She explained, “It’s an association for marketing students. I tell people that it is an association for high school students who are studying marketing.” Participant #3 of Winn-Dixie emphasized that DECA is “an organization which teaches students business principles and practices and prepares them better for the workplace. It allows them to take the academic part of it in class and then be able to apply it on the job.”

As a result of the interviews, the researcher found that all 10 participants referred to DECA as a student organization. Eight of the ten who were interviewed viewed DECA as a way for students to apply marketing skills to employment.

Summary Table 1a

What is DECA?

Categorized Responses	DECA National Advisory Board Representatives *									
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Student organization	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Prepares students for workforce	X		X	X	X				X	
Opportunity to apply learned skills	X		X	X	X		X	X	X	X
Marketing education organization	X		X	X	X		X	X		
A national association					X			X	X	

*The code list for the DECA National Advisory Board Representatives is found in Appendix B.

Research Question 1b

What is DECA's National Advisory Board?

DECA's corporate development director had stated that the purpose of this advisory board was to strengthen DECA's relationship with corporate America and to assist DECA in identifying what businesses need in the workforce, especially in the retail industry. This purpose was supported by participants of the study.

Participant #1 of Hardees Food Systems described DECA's National Advisory Board as "a group of companies or organizations that have an interest in supporting the educational efforts [of DECA] with a real slant on the business end of it, business and careers." Participant #3 of Winn-Dixie supported that definition as he added, "The National Advisory Board is a consortium of major companies throughout the United States that has an interest in developing young people into business acumen and they utilize these students in their workforce."

As with the definition of DECA, Participant #6 of the J.C. Penney had a concise definition for DECA's National Advisory Board. This participant defined the National Advisory Board as "the corporate arm of DECA." Participant #7 of Payless ShoeSource defined DECA's National Advisory Board as "a credibility tool for the organization."

Summary Table 1b

What is DECA's National Advisory Board?

Categorized Responses	DECA National Advisory Board Representatives *									
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Group of corporations	X		X		X	X		X	X	
Companies that recruit employees from DECA			X				X			
Companies that advise DECA					X			X	X	
Group that assists DECA students	X	X								
Concise definition not given		X		X						X
Organization's credibility tool								X		

*The code list for the DECA National Advisory Board Representatives is found in Appendix B.

Research Question 2

In your opinion, why is your company represented on DECA's National Advisory Board? How are they benefiting from this partnership?

The researcher found that nine out of the ten participants stated that the most significant reason why their company was represented on DECA's National Advisory Board was because it provided them with the opportunity to encourage DECA student members to consider their company as a career choice. Participant #2 of Lechter's supported this finding when he stated, "Through this partnership Lechter's is hiring well qualified students that are

trained well in customer service and that have sales skills. We know the quality of these students that are available.”

Eight of the ten persons who were interviewed indicated that their companies benefited from the partnership by recruiting students via DECA to come work at their retail company at the present time. Participant #6 of J.C. Penney summarized this finding:

We believe that DECA and the whole marketing education program teaches the students the skills for being good employees. In all of our job descriptions the bottom line is that everyone needs to be able to communicate both orally and in writing, and that’s what DECA does.

Six of the participants regarded their involvement with DECA as their company’s civic duty or because of philanthropic reasons. Participant #8 of Sears declared:

First, we employ three or four thousand DECA students. They are probably better than our average associate in most cases. It is a way to sponsor and help young people. We encourage our stores to be in touch with the DECA chapters and to employ those students. Secondly, I think just helping the youth of America in an enterprise as DECA is worthwhile.

Two represented corporations had reasons for having their partnership with DECA that were not consistent with the other participants in the study.

Participant #5 of Otis Spunkmeyer, Inc. explained:

We approach DECA a little bit differently. A lot of companies like Penney's, Sears, and Marriott do a lot of recruiting within the DECA ranks for summer jobs or internships or training positions. In our case, we're a little bit different. We literally sell cookie dough or other products of ours to the DECA chapters through their advisors [teachers], whereby DECA chapters use our products to raise funds to fund the different activities that they have.

Participant #9 (anonymous company) also indicated how that company differs in its relationship with DECA:

We have a very different affiliation than some of the others. We have all of these DECA students from across the United States do a civic consciousness project. The idea is for them to do a fund raiser where they are giving back to the community to learn to become a good corporate citizen. These students raise funds not only for muscular dystrophy [the Muscular Dystrophy Association, MDA], but also Alzheimer, cancer societies, and other nonprofit organizations. They do the fund raiser or event and then complete a full documentation of it. It's more hands-on. When MDA became associated with DECA and when

[our company] became associated with MDA, they elected to do this full program with the hope that the projects that the kids did would be fund raisers where money actually would be donated to MDA.

Summary Table 2

In your opinion, why is your company represented on DECA's National Advisory Board? How are they benefiting from this partnership?

Categorized Responses	DECA National Advisory Board Representatives *									
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Ability to recruit employees	X	X	X	X		X	X	X		X
Influence educators about industry	X			X		X				
Access to high-quality students			X	X						
Inform DECA about company as a possible future employer/career	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X
Civic duty of the company	X					X	X	X	X	X
Unique opportunity					X				X	

*The code list for the DECA National Advisory Board Representatives is found in Appendix B.

Research Question 3

How do you communicate your company involvement with DECA to your local affiliates/stores?

Each of the participating corporate representatives identified a system of communicating his or her involvement on DECA's National Advisory Board with colleagues. Several stated that the key to the success of the partnership depended upon how efficiently it was communicated internally.

Participant #2 of Lechter's claimed:

We communicate through the district managers. We funnel information through the regional offices and they pass it down to the district managers. I hold district manager meetings and we discuss it there. That's where I'm in the process of going now, to a district manager's meeting in Tampa. We'll talk about their involvement with DECA, how it is working, what's going on, who's doing what.

Participant #3 of Winn-Dixie reported:

We have a company magazine where articles appear about DECA. Also, we communicate to them through a corporate policy, which we issue to all of our human resource managers that are in our operating divisions. They require their location managers to meet occasionally, at least twice a year, with their local DECA advisors/teachers to discuss the strategies and arrangements for employing the students.

Participant #4 (anonymous company) informed the researcher that she conducted presentations at the company's state corporate human resource conferences on how she worked with DECA. It was explained that a regional director of operations was formerly involved with DECA as a student, as well as a district manager and several store managers. A local store manager was DECA's student of the year in 1972 in the state. The representative stated that she was surprised to learn that many of her company's store managers had already recruited from DECA even before she had become involved at the national level.

Participant #8 of Sears sends a personal letter once a year to the local DECA advisors. The purpose of the letter is to encourage the teachers to contact the local Sears store about employment opportunities for DECA's marketing students. He includes an informational booklet for the teachers about Sears and a related poster for their classrooms.

Wal-Mart and the J.C. Penney Company, Inc. depend on electronic communications to disseminate information about their corporate involvement with DECA. Wal-Mart downloads information to its associates (employees) about DECA. Additionally, Wal-Mart's independent television station occasionally produces a mini-documentary about DECA or features on associates who were involved with DECA.

Summary Table 3

How do you communicate your company involvement with DECA to your local affiliates/stores?

Categorized Responses	DECA National Advisory Board Representatives *									
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Corporate newsletters or magazines	X		X			X				X
Company personnel		X			X		X		X	
In-service seminars/training materials			X	X		X				
Correspondence								X		
Electronic communications						X				X

*The code list for the DECA National Advisory Board Representatives is found in Appendix B.

Research Question 4

If you could design the perfect partnership between a corporation and DECA, what elements would be included?

Half of the 10 participants in this study expressed that the most important element in a partnership such as the one that they have with DECA would be a good communication system. Participant #2 of Lechter's said, "The perfect partnership with DECA is effective communications on both parts."

Establishing respect for each of the partners was also highly regarded by the participants. Otis Spunkmeyer's representative, Participant #5,

indicated this when he stated, “I think first of all respect for what the partner is trying to achieve is important. Also, in terms of communicating, to understand what is important to each partner and then trying to understand each other’s goals and objectives.” Participant #6 of Penney’s said that there were three elements that should be included in a perfect partnership with DECA. First, a company should financially support DECA because the funding promotes good educational programs. Secondly, a company should offer employment opportunities to students involved with DECA. Thirdly, a company should have the chance to market its own products within DECA. She also said that these three components would make a partnership mutually beneficial.

Summary Table 4

If you could design the perfect partnership between a corporation and DECA, what elements would be included?

Categorized Responses	DECA National Advisory Board Representatives *									
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Strong communication	X	X	X	X	X					
Mutual respect					X		X	X		X
Recruitment opportunities				X		X	X		X	
Marketing possibilities						X				

*The code list for the DECA National Advisory Board Representatives is found in Appendix B.

Research Question 5

What is your perception of how students are being prepared for marketing careers as a result of a partnership with DECA?

The researcher did not find as much consistency among these responses. The researcher also found that there was a need to have to explain the question or rephrase it in order to obtain a response. Additionally, many of the answers that were given did not relate directly to the question. Two of the ten who were interviewed were unable to respond because they claimed that they were too far removed from the students to know how they were being prepared for marketing careers. The other participants responded briefly and did not elaborate.

Participant #5 of Otis Spunkmeyer said:

That's a very hard question for me to respond to because I am not in the classes. I don't know what goes on from day to day. I have an idea of the curriculum to some degree because of some of the contest events that DECA runs at conferences, but not being in the classroom every day, it is really hard for me to respond.

However, Participant #6 of Penney's said:

The students that I am seeing now for the most part are better prepared than when I was a store personnel manager fifteen,

sixteen, seventeen years ago. More and more they are college bound and they are looking for careers. So, from that perspective, the schools, teachers, advisors are doing a better job of preparing.

Summary Table 5

What is your perception of how students are being prepared for marketing careers as a result of a partnership with DECA?

Categorized Responses	DECA National Advisory Board Representatives *									
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
On-the-job training	X						X		X	
Learning skills in the classrooms		X	X					X		
Teacher involvement				X						
Better prepared students						X				
Unable to respond					X					X

*The code list for the DECA National Advisory Board Representatives is found in Appendix B.

Research Question 6

What have been some recent outcomes as a result of your company having this representation on DECA's National Advisory Board? Do you have any related data or feedback from your local affiliates?

Participant #1 of Hardees Food Systems summarized the outcome of Hardees involvement with DECA by stating:

If we are one of the largest employers of DECA students, that, I would think, would be a positive outcome. I doubt that this would have happened if we had not been involved with DECA over 15 years. I don't think that we would be having that kind of impact with educators who are helping students work at Hardees.

Participant #10 of Wal-Mart has learned from the Wal-Mart recruiters of outcomes from their involvement with DECA. Although she claimed that she was "not channeled into hearing the DECA success stories directly," she knew that they existed. This participant explained that, "We try to recruit top-notch students and DECA produces top-notch students."

Six of the ten representatives who were interviewed agreed with the response which was given by Participant #6 of Penney's. She answered:

The thing that my bosses want me to do is to promote. They want me to talk and tell more and more people about the number of students that we are now hiring as a result of our partnership with DECA.

None of the representatives were able to provide any kind of statistical data or documented feedback to the researcher. Most of the participants expressed that to their knowledge DECA's corporate development director retained this information.

Summary Table 6

What have been some recent outcomes as a result of your company having this representation on DECA's National Advisory Board? Do you have any related data or feedback from your local affiliates?

Categorized Responses	DECA National Advisory Board Representatives *									
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Support from educators	X			X						
Increase in recruited employees	X	X				X		X		X
Involved in DECA conferences		X					X			
Company continuing the partnership			X			X	X	X	X	X
No outcomes known or identified					X					
No specific data found	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X

*The code for the DECA National Advisory Board Representatives is found in Appendix B.

Research Question 7

How do you feel this partnership has been maintained by DECA? What has been done well? Where could DECA improve?

The researcher found from the interviews that overall the representatives from DECA's National Advisory Board who participated in the study felt that DECA maintained the partnership well. Four of the ten participants stated that DECA did an excellent job of maintaining the partnership and could not identify any areas that needed improvement. Six of the those who were interviewed believed that they received adequate

program information from DECA and that communication was sufficient.

According to four participants, one area needing improvement was better organized meetings of DECA’s National Advisory Board. Participant #4 (anonymous company) said, “I think the meetings that I’ve been in have been informative, but I guess because I am in the business world and we are so busy, the meetings need to be more concise.” Participant #6 of Penney’s recognized that some of the members of DECA’s National Advisory Board had expressed a need for better use of their time at annual meetings. She stated, “The big issue is their time. How can we make each meeting more effective? How can we get the greatest involvement from all of the companies?”

Summary Table 7

*How do you feel this partnership has been maintained by DECA?
What has been done well? Where could DECA improve?*

Categorized Responses	DECA National Advisory Board Representatives *									
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Partnership is well maintained					X			X	X	X
Desire more program information	X			X						
Need better communication	X	X	X							
Need better organized meetings	X			X		X	X			
Receive adequate information			X		X	X	X	X		X

*The code for the DECA National Advisory Board Representatives is found in Appendix B.

Research Question 8

If there was a company joining DECA's National Advisory Board today, what advice would you give its representative in order to make a successful partnership?

The researcher found that the participants of the study were most vocal in response to this question. Participants spoke at length about what advice they would share with a new company joining DECA's National Advisory Board.

Participant #5 of Otis Spunkmeyer said:

I would say that the answer to that is involvement. It has to be more than showing up at a trade show or showing up at a National DECA convention. You need to get involved with the National Advisory Board, you need to get involved with some of the committees, you need to possibly sponsor one of the contests that they [DECA] have.

Participant #2 of Lechters, Inc. explained that:

The biggest thing that the National Advisory Board offers is visibility. The National Advisory Board offers companies coming on board not only the opportunity to interact with DECA but with other businesses. This is true especially in the retail and service industry where we are after the same product

or results of working with the students, their schools, and communities.

Participant #3 of Winn-Dixie supported that statement:

They [a new partner] really need to get involved at the local level. The local level is where it is at between the store manager and the DECA coordinator. The coordinators play a big part in making DECA a success by communicating that to managers.

Its a two-sided role.

Additionally, Participant #7 of Payless ShoeSource agreed with his fellow advisory board peers as he stated, “There needs to be a willingness to participate. It's never going to be high on anyone’s list, it just takes some extra commitment.”

Wal-Mart’s representative, Participant #10, supported the need for commitment. However she suggested another top priority:

Being Wal-Mart, I would tell them first you have to take care of your associates [employees] and especially take care of your customers. If you don’t do that, then you are in big trouble.

Beyond that, you need to partner with organizations that are producing what you want, such as DECA, meaning kids that are educated and knowing what it is like in the business world. You need to make those partnerships. You need to have commitment.

Participant #9 (anonymous company) advised that:

First of all, they have to have approval from the top rank. From the senior management of the company. In order to take advantage of the company for things like recruiting and other aspects, you have to have some kind of approval.

Summary Table 8

If there was a company joining DECA's National Advisory Board today, what advice would you give its representative to make a successful partnership?

Categorized Responses	DECA National Advisory Board Representatives *									
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Interact with educators	X	X	X			X		X	X	X
National Advisory Board network	X	X			X		X	X		
Participate in DECA activities	X	X	X		X	X	X	X		
Secure upper management support				X	X	X			X	X
Committed to the partnership			X			X	X	X		

*The code for the DECA National Advisory Board Representatives is found in Appendix B.

Research Question 9

If you had to choose only one word to summarize your partnership with DECA by serving on its National Advisory Board, what would it be?

Half of the participants used the word opportunity to answer this research question. Several of the participants from the study indicated that this opportunity was an advantage. Participant #7 of Payless ShoeSource explained:

It's an advantage to us that they [the students] come to us with that DECA seal.... I think that it is a real advantage. It's probably one that we don't utilize to its fullest because we hear from district managers from all across the country; they have a constant battle of recruiting high-quality part-time associates [employees] and also identifying potential store manager candidates.

Participant #6 of Penney's chose the word partnership for her response. She stated, "It is a partnership and that is what is unique about it. They [DECA] don't walk in and say, 'what can you do for us?' This is a partnership in the true sense of the word."

The term win-win was used by Participant #9 (anonymous company). She said, "DECA's relationship with [our company] is a win-win. The community of goodwill is there—what we give and what the kids give back to their own communities. Everybody wins."

Summary Table 9

If you had to choose only one word to summarize your partnership with DECA by serving on its National Advisory Board, what would it be?

Categorized Responses	DECA National Advisory Board Representatives *									
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Opportunity/Advantage	X	X		X	X		X			
Partnership						X				
Win-win			X					X	X	
Commitment										X

*The code for the DECA National Advisory Board Representatives is found in Appendix B.

Research Question 10

Is there anything else that you would like to share with me in relation to this study?

Five of the 10 participants who were interviewed had nothing additional to add to the interview after the previous nine questions were asked and answered.

Participant #1 of Hardees Food Systems added:

I didn't say this before when we were talking, but now is a good time to bring this up. I think DECA is a key component in helping to build leadership in young folks. I think that this is a

real positive for the DECA organization and they do it well. They give them [the students] the chance to grow.

Participant #5 of Otis Spunkmeyer wanted to add:

Our partnership has been absolutely perfect for them [the students] because they can learn many different aspects of developing a marketing plan, selling a product, or inventory control. You name it, and they have been able to learn it. These projects and programs are what has helped DECA become what it is.

Three participants wanted to make sure that the researcher knew that DECA needed to work on strengthening its image. Participant #8 of Sears explained. "I would like to see a better perception of how many people view DECA," he said. This participant continued:

They [people] have the perception that the students are not college bound and are not capable of going on to college. There is also a poor perception in the minds of most students, and in fact of most Americans, of retailing as a career. If you look at our [Sears] prospectus, you'll see that the top people in the company make millions of dollars and middle management is also paid very well. I would like to see an enhanced image of DECA and an enhanced image of retail as a career.

In addition to his comments on the need for DECA to strengthen its image, Participant #8 requested that the researcher include the following in the study:

We have excellent leadership in DECA’s National Executive Director. He is an educator by background, but he has a good business sense. He also has a sense that we need to amplify the strength of DECA, and the strength of DECA is its affiliation with business.

Summary Table 10

Is there anything else that you would like to share with me in relation to this study?

Categorized Responses	DECA National Advisory Board Representatives *									
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
DECA’s leadership component	X									X
Students’ experiences					X					
Improved image needed						X		X	X	
Strong DECA administration								X		
Nothing additional		X	X	X			X			X

*The code for the DECA National Advisory Board Representatives is found in Appendix B.

Summary of Interview with DECA's National Retail Federation Representative

The researcher conducted an interview with an employee of the National Retail Federation. At the time of the interview this employee held the position of Workforce Initiatives Manager. She also served on DECA's National Advisory Board as liaison with her employer. The National Retail Federation is a subsidiary of the National Retail Institute, a not-for-profit research education organization, which promotes issues important to the future of retailing.

The purpose of the interview was to obtain a perspective from the National Retail Federation as to why the 10 companies from this study might have chosen to have a partnership with DECA. Prior to the interview, this employee was provided with several questions used as anchor questions for the interview. Those questions included: Why would a retail based company want to serve on DECA's National Advisory Board? What is your perception of how students are being prepared for marketing careers through DECA? What are some elements that make a productive education and business partnership?

This employee expressed her opinion as to why the 10 corporations that were included in the study had a partnership with DECA:

The main reason, is because DECA is a well-run organization. I don't think that is true of all organizations. I think that this gives them a new perspective on education in general. DECA just has

a strong sense of how business is organized, how it operates, and it handles itself and its students to respond in a much more entrepreneurial way. DECA is the best run student organization that I have ever seen. I think that the retail companies would be pleasantly surprised and impressed with the caliber of the organization and of the students. I think that retailers are very interested in influencing the kind of education that people get in high school, because a lot of high school students get their first jobs in retail.

When this employee was asked to elaborate if students were being prepared for marketing careers she responded accordingly:

I think that we could be doing a lot more. First of all, the expectation on retailers' part is not that people will have careers in retailing. We haven't done a lot to identify the career path or to assume that people are going to be there for a long time. The schools probably don't outline those career paths either, which may not be their fault. I also think that there needs to be more interaction, as there are still a lot of teachers that have no sense of what goes on in marketing careers, not just in the vocational areas, but in the general academic areas.

The researcher was particularly interested in this employees' opinion

on what components contributed to a successful partnership. Her response was:

The key is to identify the benefits for everybody. Specifically, make sure that everyone is working for their own benefit as well as mutual ones. The other piece is that I don't think that businesses have traditionally been true partners. Now they [businesses] are more willing to be true partners and education is finding that this means that businesses might actually influence curriculum. You have to go beyond the idea of superficial partnerships for it to work.

The interview was summarized by this employee when she concluded: In answer to your questions, in my opinion it is very important for DECA to address whatever skills are being addressed nationally by the retail industry. The goal is for the industry to certify those skills. So, to the extent that DECA students would be certified by the industry where they want to work, by those standards, that would become a part of their school program, and that brings closure to the whole partnership.

Summary of Interviews with DECA's Corporate Development Director

Several interviews were held with DECA's Corporate Development Director for the purpose of determining how the 10 identified partnerships of the study affected DECA. This employee has been a member of the National DECA staff since 1984. It was from several interviews that the researcher was able to obtain information that validated much of the data collected from the interviews with the identified representatives of DECA's National Advisory Board. This employee provided the researcher with details on each of the 10 partnerships. That information can be found in Appendix C. These details provided the researcher with information on what DECA received as a result of the partnerships.

Two personal interviews were conducted with this employee prior to the start of the interviews with the 10 representatives and one interview followed. During the course of the data collection, he assisted the researcher by providing guidance on how to secure some of the interviews when scheduling became problematic.

The researcher asked him how members of DECA's National Advisory Board were recruited. He explained, "You have to find the key person in the organization that makes decisions about what partnerships the company will be involved with." This employee further explained that he and the DECA staff, "specifically target an executive in a company that other nonprofits don't target." That individual is usually associated with the

corporate human resources division. The researcher was told:

In one particular case, it took six times of approaching the Red Lobster Restaurants before I could reach the executive who had the authority to decide on a partnership with DECA. I asked him to give me just 30 minutes of his time and if he didn't like what I had to say, I would leave him [Red Lobster] alone. When the day of the meeting finally arrived, this executive had the company's college recruiter join us. The meeting lasted for an hour and a half, and by the time I left I had their commitment to join the National Advisory Board.

He also wanted to share related details on recruiting members of DECA's National Advisory Board:

Our contact with Red Lobster also led us to the Olive Garden Restaurant as a prospect. We often use the National Advisory Board to find leads. They're very dedicated and they don't mind sharing leads with us. However, the way that we became involved with Nike is because the person who was our contact at Kinney Shoes in New York left and went to Nike. We still kept Kinney Shoes as a National Advisory Board member since Kinney Shoes had been with DECA for over 40 years. Now we have a new partner in Nike, but with a familiar face, our old contact from Kinney Shoes. That happens sometimes.

The researcher was also interested in learning from this employee how the partnerships were maintained by DECA. His response confirmed what the researcher had heard from the participants during the 10 interviews. He said:

We work with each company individually. We meet face to face with each member of the National Advisory Council at least once a year. We review their individual partnership at least once a year. We don't ask them if they want Plan A or Plan B. We develop a J.C. Penney plan or a Toys "R" Us plan. All of these members have to justify the time that they spend with DECA. There has to be a return on their investment of time and resources. They have to know that we'll do anything in our power to make the partnership work for them. It is a tremendous amount of work for us to do it this way, but it is the only way that seems to work. The personal attention is the key.

When asked by the researcher how the local affiliates of the represented companies become involved with DECA, this employee offered his opinion:

Our goal from the start, is to include local and state DECA representatives. I often take the state supervisor of marketing education with me to call on a new member of the National Advisory Board and introduce them to each other. Our goal is for DECA's Smith or Jones is to meet their Smith or Jones. These partnerships will

not work if it stays only at the national level. It has to get down to where the students are in the classrooms. The students are the secret to the success of these partnerships.

Some recent outcomes of these corporate partnerships were shared with the researcher by this employee. He explained that in the past few years there has been an increase in the number of DECA student members who have become employed by companies represented on DECA's National Advisory Board, according to the identified corporate representatives. DECA's corporate development director supported this belief with information that just three years ago, Penney's only had 1,000 DECA student members employed at Penney stores nationwide. At the time of this study, over 4,000 were employed. Winn-Dixie claimed that 20% of its management had a background with DECA. Payless ShoeSource imposed a policy that no one under the age of 17 years old could become an employee unless he or she had been in DECA. Eighty percent of the companies that join DECA's National Advisory Board remain in the partnership. Those companies that discontinue the partnership generally do so because the identified representative did not invest enough time or had a lack of commitment. This employee reminded the researcher that the 10 companies that participated for this study were regarded by DECA as successful partners.

DECA's corporate development director thought that it was important for the researcher to know that DECA regards these partnerships as

successful because career awareness and opportunities are provided for their members. In addition to the information that the researcher obtained from these interviews, this employee provided a variety of related written materials for review. Included was information from previous meetings, DECA's National Advisory Board program workbooks, and related reports.

Summary

The purpose of this study was to provide an analysis of 10 corporations, which are represented on DECA's National Advisory Board. What was analyzed was, if DECA's National Advisory Boards' business partnerships are successful, and if so, what makes a successful partnership? It was understood by the researcher prior to data collection that the 10 subjects of the study were considered successful partners by DECA.

The findings provided information as to why these partnerships existed and why they were regarded as successful. In this chapter, the responses to the research questions and the outcome of interviews were displayed in a tabular format and descriptive text.

Chapter V

Summary of Findings, Conclusions, and Recommendations

This study was an analysis of 10 corporations that were represented on DECA's National Advisory Board. The purpose of this chapter is to answer the research questions which were investigated in this study. These questions were; are DECA's National Advisory Boards' business partnerships successful, and if so, what makes a successful partnership?

The research techniques used for this study included interviewing, document collection and review, and analysis. The interviewing process included descriptive, structural, and contrast questioning. A content review was conducted of relevant documents. The method of analysis was presented in a tabular format and descriptive text. From the obtained data, the researcher made conclusions and recommendations.

Research Questions Restated with Summary of Findings from the Advisory Board Interviews

1. What is DECA? How would you describe it to someone who knows nothing about it? What is DECA's National Advisory Board?

Berns (1996) defined DECA as an association of marketing students. All of those who were interviewed for this study were able to articulate that DECA was an association for students. Likewise, all were able to express that DECA was affiliated with marketing education or job training.

The participants of the study were unclear of the purpose of DECA's National Advisory Board, which is to work directly with DECA to influence its educational program and prepare students in career skills and job training. Only 2 participants linked the advisory board with assisting DECA in preparing students for the work place.

2. In your opinion, why is your company represented on DECA's National Advisory Board? How is it benefiting from this partnership?

The researcher found that all but one of the companies had a partnership with DECA because it allowed their representatives to inform DECA student members of the company as a possible future employer and career choice. Recruiting current employees was secondary. The results from this research question supported the position of the National Association for Industry-Education Cooperation (1980):

A council should offer educators an opportunity to strengthen the instructional effort at all levels of education through an applied approach to concepts and principles that relate classroom teaching to the world of work and career fields, and to develop and maintain curriculum relevant to current and anticipated employment opportunities (p.80).

3. How do you communicate your company involvement with DECA to your local affiliates/stores? ³

All of the participants had an identified system of communicating their involvement on the advisory council to their colleagues. The interviewees expressed how critical this communication was to the success of the program. The researcher concluded that although there was not one similar source of communication among the 10 different companies, the systems used by each company were effective because each corporation had existing partnerships at the local levels. The quality of the partnership did not appear to be affected by the communication method whether the existing opportunities with DECA were communicated personally by the corporate representative or electronically.

4. If you could design the perfect partnership between a corporation and DECA what elements would be included?

Mulkey (1995) stated that as businesses and schools work to help each other, there must be consistent effort aimed at maintaining the relationship so that both groups continue to reap benefits. It was stated that the program will not function properly unless it is motivated regularly. Both parties must exert effort to maintain successful, lasting relationships. This coincided with the results from this study.

The researcher learned from the interviewees that they were treated with respect by the DECA staff. They felt that the personal attention that they received by DECA's corporate development director was pivotal to the success of the partnership. Several of the participants told the researcher that

they felt comfortable discussing any relevant matter of the partnership with DECA's executive director or corporate development director. When certain situations had arisen or requests needed to be made, the corporate representatives always felt that their voices were heard by DECA. Many of the comments the researcher heard during the interviews concerned the need for strong communication to ensure a successful partnership.

Businesses expectations from partnerships should include the desire to motivate students, help in reinforcing basic skills, demonstration of relevant knowledge to teachers and students, and assistance with developing social and team building skills (Warwick, 1993). Several of the represented companies spoke of these traits and added the opportunity to recruit present and future employees.

5. What is your perception of how students are being prepared for marketing careers as a result of a partnership with DECA?

As previously stated in the findings, the researcher did not find as much consistency among the responses to this question. Although several participants said they believed DECA was fulfilling its mission by preparing students for marketing careers, they could not articulate how it was actually taking place. Nearly all who were interviewed attended DECA's national conferences where students participated in marketing education and leadership development competitions. Many expressed that it was through these contests that the student members of DECA could best demonstrate

their preparation for the workforce. The competitions linked their on-the-job experiences with classroom instruction.

6. What have been some recent outcomes as a result of your company having this representation on DECA's National Advisory Board? Do you have any related data or feedback from your local affiliates?

The results of this question led the researcher to conclude that the identified partnerships were considered successful by the corporate representatives. All but one of the participants was able to identify a direct outcome of the partnership. The most measurable outcome was the number of recruited employees by the corporations from within the DECA organization. Although some of the representatives did not know the number of employees recruited from within DECA because of the large size of the company, they believed recruiting was taking place at the local level and that it was a successful method.

The National Alliance of Business (1995) reported that if young people leave school with 12 years of low expectations, shoddy work, and minimal performance, their future prospects as citizens and workers can only be grim. The research from this study demonstrated that the identified companies supported DECA in order to avoid this bleak prediction made by the National Alliance of Business. The corporate representatives explained to the researcher that through DECA students were motivated to develop leadership skills and apply marketing skills to the work place.

7. How do you feel this partnership has been maintained by DECA? What has been done well? Where could DECA improve?

It was apparent to the researcher from the comments made during the interviews that the participants regarded their affiliation with DECA positively. Again, they often referred to the personal attention they received. Many expressed that this partnership was unlike any other partnership in which the company was involved because of how it was tailored to their specific needs. The identified corporate representatives selected to be interviewed came from companies that were considered by DECA to be successful partners. Therefore, it was likely that much of their responses would be positive.

Because of the advisory members' demanding work schedules, many felt that the various meetings held for them by DECA needed better organization. Several suggested that a typical meeting of two days could be condensed to a one-day meeting. They also felt more advanced preparation for the meeting should be undertaken by the members.

8. If there was a company joining DECA's National Advisory Board today, what advice would you give its representative to make a successful partnership?

Toubat (1994) indicated that partnerships that are established based on specific goals and objectives are usually mutually beneficial. Additionally, Toubat declared that partners who are team players and committed are more

likely to have successful unions. This theory supports the responses to this question that the researcher was provided. Many of the participants of this study indicated that if there was a new company representative joining the advisory board they would have to be committed for the partnership to be successful. Other factors would include interacting with DECA personnel and members, networking among the advisory board members, and participating in DECA activities.

9. If you had to choose only one word to summarize your partnership with DECA by serving on its National Advisory Board, what would it be?

Predominantly the word chosen by the interviewees to answer this question was opportunity. This response was supported by the National Association for Industry-Education Cooperation (1980). The association claimed an advisory council should offer educators an opportunity to strengthen instructional effort at all levels of education—through an applied approach to concepts and principles—that relate classroom teaching to the world of work and career fields. Through DECA’s National Advisory Board, opportunities exist for educators, DECA, and the represented corporations. Several of the advisory board members called this relationship a win-win scenario.

10. Is there anything else that you would like to share with me in relation to this study?

Comments made by the participants when answering this question varied. However, the comments made were offered with the intent that this might be the last opportunity for the corporate representative to provide an opinion. One participant stressed the reason the advisory board was successful was because of the skilled leadership of the DECA organization. Others voiced their feelings that DECA needs to strengthen its image and market the association as a viable resource for entering a retail career. Lastly, it was shared that DECA provides a means for students to enhance their leadership skills, which the advisory board members declared was critical to students' development.

**Summary Findings of Interviews
with the National Retail Federation Representative
and DECA's Corporate Development Director**

According to Miles and Huberman (1994), triangulating is supposed to support a finding by showing that independent measures of it agree with it or, at least, do not contradict the research. It was as a result of the interviews with the representative from the National Retail Federation and DECA's corporate development director that triangularization was displayed in this study. The findings from these interviews, but most importantly from the interviews with DECA's corporate development director, confirmed the impression of the researcher. That being, these business partnerships existed because each party received something from the partnership.

The purpose of the interview with the National Retail Federation was to obtain their representative's perspective as to why the 10 identified companies would have a partnership with DECA. The representative summarized that retail companies are interested in influencing high school education, because many high school students obtain their first jobs in retail. It was also added that the advisory board could assist DECA with offering programs that meet retail industry standards. Rist (1990) suggested that schools should be more competitive, more accountable, and more driven by the needs of the market they serve. The interviewee expressed a need for DECA to address whatever skills are being addressed nationally by the retail industry. The outcome would then be that industry would certify those skills.

The interviewee commented that DECA was a well-run organization. She stressed that due to the efficient operations of the organization, the national advisory board was also effective. Members of the advisory board had shared with her how impressed they were with the personal attention they had received.

The various interviews and discussions with DECA's corporate development director also confirmed the researchers' findings. The DECA employee shared with the researcher that the philosophy within the DECA organization was to individualize each of these partnerships. The researcher learned that the companies were provided with a specialized program that met their needs and those of DECA. The researcher gained a sense of commitment to the success of the partnership by DECA's corporate

development. This commitment was articulated during the interviews with the 10 representatives from DECA's National Advisory Board.

Additionally, when interviewing DECA's corporate development director, the researcher learned that DECA was able to provide its student members with employment opportunities at the companies which had representation on the advisory board. Also confirmed, was the process of promoting DECA's programs at the local level. This undertaking was a priority of DECA because it provided the method for on-the-job training for its members.

Conclusions

The following conclusions were supported by the data that were collected and analyzed from this study. The conclusions are categorized into these major topic areas: purpose of the partnership, communication methods, elements of the partnership, student preparation, outcomes, effectiveness, and advice for future partners.

The researcher concluded from the data that the overall purpose of the partnership was the represented companies choosing to have their partnerships because they obtained present and future employees. Additionally, DECA was primarily affected by these partnerships by having these employment opportunities for their members through their partners.

It was concluded that there were a variety of effective communication methods being used for disseminating information about the partnerships

within the companies. The researcher found from the data that all representatives who participated in this study communicated their partnership with DECA internally. Several representatives regularly informed their upper management about the effectiveness of the partnership to recruit employees. The researcher also found in the data that most of the representatives were unable to articulate the definition or purpose of DECA's National Advisory Board, but still were able to support its existence.

The researcher found that there were certain elements of the partnership that the participants of this study considered relevant to a successful partnership. A contributing factor to a successful partnership was involvement at the local level of DECA advisors/teachers, students and company personnel. Also, participating in DECA activities/conferences contributes to a successful partnership. However, data supported the conclusion that in order for these partnerships to be effective, commitment was needed to the partnership from both partners.

As a result of this study, the researcher concluded that some of the representatives claimed that they were too removed from the classroom to fully understand DECA's integration into the curriculum and therefore should visit local programs. However, the researcher learned from the participants that they assumed that DECA was effectively preparing its student members for marketing careers.

The researcher summarized from the collected data that an outcome of participating on this advisory board was the ability to network among the

board's members and within DECA. Another outcome was the participants supporting the concept that much of the success of these partnerships could be attributed to the individualized attention each advisory board member received from DECA. They considered DECA's corporate development director position essential.

Conclusions can be made about the effectiveness of the partnership which were based on the data. Specifically, all of the advisory board members felt the partnerships were well maintained by DECA. However, many of the representatives felt that the annual meetings needed to become more efficient. Several indicated their time was not well used. Overall the corporate representatives on the advisory board were satisfied with their partnerships with DECA. Although not considered by the representatives to presently be effecting the partnership, many of them stated that DECA needed to specifically improve its public image and that of careers in the retailing industry in general.

It was concluded by the researcher that participating corporate partners of DECA's National Advisory Board would advise potential partners to regard the partnership with DECA as an opportunity for both their corporation and DECA. Also, there needs to be support from upper management in order for the partnerships to thrive. Finally, the researcher concluded from the collected data that both partners must be willing to commit time and effort to the partnership if it is to succeed.

Recommendations for Further Study

Based upon the findings, discussion, and conclusions of this study, an analysis of 10 business partnerships of the National DECA organization led to the following recommendations for further study:

- A historical case study of one of the more tenured companies represented on DECA's National Advisory Board to record how the partnership evolved.
- A case study on the leadership style of DECA's upper management in relation to its national advisory board.
- A comparison study of the advisory boards among the eight national vocational student organizations.
- A study surveying local DECA advisors and local advisory board affiliates on the effectiveness of their partnerships with DECA.
- A case study on companies formerly on DECA's National Advisory Board to determine why the partnerships discontinued.
- A case study on former DECA members who are employed by companies represented on the advisory board.
- An in-depth analysis of a partnership from this advisory board on its involvement at the local, state, and national levels.
- A quantitative study collecting data of the number of DECA students currently employed at companies represented on the National Advisory Board.

Recommendations for DECA

As a result of this study, the researcher has 4 recommendations for DECA for the purpose of enhancing their National Advisory Board program. First, in response to the need to have more effective meetings, DECA should survey its advisory board members to learn from them how best to streamline these meetings. Secondly, DECA should provide more opportunities for members of its advisory board to visit marketing classes and local DECA chapter activities. Thirdly, a media campaign should be considered by DECA to strengthen its image as a viable recruiting resource and to further raise their visibility throughout corporate America. Lastly, DECA staff should develop an orientation program for new and old members of the advisory board to help them gain a greater understanding of the purpose of the board.

Recommendations for Other Associations

This study was designed to identify major factors, which contribute to successful business partnerships with a national association of marketing students. The study was to provide valuable information to DECA about its National Advisory Board as well as how these partnerships help the organization meet its goals.

It was also intended that this study would be useful in raising the awareness and benefits of successful partnerships to other associations, especially other vocational student organizations. The study evaluated the

identified existing successful partnerships of one nationally known student organization. An outcome of the research and data collection should be of value to other associations.

The researcher suggests that other associations consider the following four recommendations when developing business partnerships.

1. Provide a commitment of staff resources to cultivate and maintain partnerships.

2. Remain focused on the provision of both the association and the corporation to have an equal opportunity to benefit from the partnership.

3. Recruit corporation representatives from companies which already have a relationship with the student members of the association, or those companies which could potentially develop such a relationship.

4. Plan for the best use of each partners' time and resources.

Overall, this study was conducted to assist DECA, but also to contribute to the development of education and business partnerships of other organizations. The education and business partnerships of DECA differ from other national organizations because of how each partnership is customized. However, there is a great deal which other national associations could learn from DECA's business partnerships.

Epilogue

I am an executive director of a national youth organization, similar to DECA. As a result, I have worked closely with DECA over the past nine years. During my tenure I have had numerous opportunities to become familiar with DECA's operations and programs. It was my opinion that DECA's National Advisory Board was one of the most successful business partner programs in education. This opinion, as well as my respect for DECA and its national staff, led me to select DECA's National Advisory Board for this study. I wanted to learn firsthand if DECA's business partnerships were as successful as I had believed. As a result of conducting this study, I wanted to gain knowledge that would enhance the organization where I presently work. Additionally I wanted to learn how to be a more effective executive director in a business partnership.

I learned from undertaking this research study that DECA regards their business partners as very important components of their organization. These partnerships are not superficial since I have learned how the DECA staff works very hard to personalized each partnership. I have also learned that it is critical for partnerships to be advantageous for each partner. DECA, in addition to the companies, each gained something from these partnerships which secured a good collaboration. I now realize it is important for the educational organization to initiate the partnership by asking the corporation how they can help meet the needs of the company and industry.

Perhaps the most valuable lesson I have learned is the importance of the cultivation of the partnership. Often we attempt to expedite the security of business partnerships to meet our own needs. I realize as a result of this study that good partnerships are based on communication, trust, and cooperation between the partners. When these exist, in time a solid foundation will be built for a lasting partnership.

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Appendix A

Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University Informed Consent for Participants of Investigative Projects

Title of Project: An Analysis of Business Partnerships of the
National DECA Organization

Investigator: Rosanne White

I. Purpose of the Research: The purpose of the study is to provide an analysis of national corporations which are represented on the national business/ industry advisory board of DECA, a national association of marketing students.

II. Procedures: Telephone interviews will be conducted by the investigator and the participants. The interviews will be recorded and will last up to one half hour. A copy of the interview transcript text will be sent to each participant following the interview for their review.

III. Risks: There should be no apparent risks for the participants.

IV. Benefits of this Project: The benefit of this study is that the National DECA and the participants of the represented companies will obtain information about the effectiveness of DECA's National Advisory Board.

V. Extent of Anonymity and Confidentiality:

1. If you prefer, all references to you by name and to your company will be erased from the audio tapes and their transcriptions, from the summary of your employment history, and from the narrative sections of the final report. However, you may give permission to use your name and your company's name by indicating so at the end of this consent form.

2. Audio tapes of your interview will be erased as soon as they are transcribed. There will be no direct quotations from these transcripts that may identify you or your company. However, you may give permission to make direct quotations by indicating so at the end of this consent form. You will have the opportunity to read the transcript of your interview in order to indicate any material you wish to keep confidential, not to be quoted or is incorrect.

VI. Compensation: There is no compensation to be earned by the participants. There have been no promises made or no guarantee of benefits to encourage the participants to engage in this study.

VII. Freedom to Withdraw: The participants are free to withdraw at any time.

VIII. Approval of Research: This research has been approved, as required, by the Institutional Review Board for Research Involving Human Subjects at Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, College of Education.

IX: Subject's Responsibilities: I voluntarily agree to participate in this study.

X: Subject's Permission: I have read and understand the purpose and conditions of this project and give my consent to participate. I understand that I may refuse to answer any particular question or to withdraw at anytime. In addition, I agree to the following:

1. Permission is given to use my name. Yes_____ No_____
2. Permission is given to use my company's name. Yes_____ No_____
3. Permission is given to use direct quotes from my interview materials.
Yes_____ No_____

I understand that I may, if I choose, exclude any material which I feel may compromise my anonymity.

Name

Date

Signature

Should I have any questions about this research or its conduct, I may contact:

Investigator: Ms. Rosanne White #1/703/938-8434

Faculty Advisor: Dr. Steve Parson #1/540/231-9722

Appendix B

Code list for the DECA National Advisory Board

Participant #1—Hardees Food Systems

Participant #2—Lechter's, Inc.

Participant #3—Winn-Dixie Foods

Participant #4—Anonymous company

Participant #5—Otis Spunkmeyer, Inc.

Participant #6—J.C. Penney Company, Inc.

Participant #7—Payless ShoeSource

Participant #8—Sears

Participant #9—Anonymous company

Participant #10—Wal-Mart

Appendix C

Company Profiles of the DECA National Advisory Board Representatives

Information about the companies was obtained through their annual reports. Information about DECA was provided by DECA staff.

1. Hardee's Food Systems, Inc.

Hardee's Food Systems, Inc. is a subsidiary of Imasco Limited, a leading consumer products and services growth company. Hardees is the fourth largest quick-service hamburger restaurant company in the United States, with system sales of \$6.2 billion. Hardee's has been associated with DECA for 15 years. This company sponsors a National DECA competition, the Quick Serve Restaurant Series. Hardee's also exhibits at the National DECA annual conference.

2. Lechter's, Inc.

Lechter's Housewares specialty retail stores offer moderately priced, functional products for the kitchen, storage, and business organization supplies. The stores are primarily mall based. Lechters, Inc. has only been involved with National DECA for three years. Currently the company exhibits at the National DECA annual conference.

3. Winn-Dixie Stores, Inc.

Winn-Dixie is the nation's fifth largest retail food chain with 126,000 employees. The company operates 1,178 supermarkets in 14 states and in the Bahamas. Winn-Dixie has been involved with DECA for 53 years. The company sponsors a national competition for DECA and provides college scholarships.

4. Anonymous company.

5. Otis Spunkmeyer, Inc.

Otis Spunkmeyer is the leading manufacturer and distributor of frozen gourmet cookie dough in the country. The company also operates a chain of baked cookie stores. Otis Spunkmeyer, Inc. sponsors the Learn and Earn Project for National DECA. Also, the company provides college scholarships, exhibits at the annual National DECA conference, and places advertisements in DECA publications. This company has been affiliated with DECA for four years.

6. J.C. Penney Company, Inc.

J.C. Penney is America's largest department store, operating 1,238 stores in all 50 states, Puerto Rico, Mexico, and Chile. The company has 114 million square feet of space in shopping malls, more store space than any other department store in the United States. J.C. Penney has been associated with DECA for more than 50 years. Mr. J.C. Penney was the founder of DECA's National Advisory Board. This company sponsors the National DECA Retail Merchandising Series competitions, exhibits at the annual conference, and provides scholarships.

7. Payless ShoeSource

Payless ShoeSource is the largest family footwear retailer in the nation. In 1996 the company sold 195 million pairs of shoes. Payless operates 4,236 stores in 50 states, Washington, DC, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands. Payless has been associated with DECA for eight years. The company provides college scholarships to DECA members and exhibits at the National DECA annual conference.

8. Sears

Sears has been a multi-line retailer in America, Canada, and Mexico for 110 years providing a wide array of merchandise and services. It serves 50 million households annually. Full-line stores are located principally in shopping malls and sell apparel, home fashions, and hard lines merchandise. Sears has partnered with DECA for 51 years. The company sponsors the National DECA Apparel and Accessories Marketing Series competition. Additionally, the company sponsors scholarships and marketing videos, places advertisements, and exhibits at the national conference.

9. Anonymous company.

10. Wal-Mart Stores, Inc.

There are 2,400 Wal-Mart Stores in the country. Wal-Mart, along with its affiliate SAM'S Clubs, employ 675,000 associates and has become the largest discount retailer in the country. Wal-Mart's has been associated with DECA for seven years. This company sponsors college scholarships for DECA members.

Vita

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Education

Ed.D., Administration, Virginia Tech University, Blacksburg, VA, 1997.
M.Ed., Administration, George Mason University, Fairfax, VA, 1982.
B.S., Education, Radford University, Radford, VA, 1976.

Experience

Executive Director, Technology Student Association, 1987 to present.
Assistant Director, Development, George Mason University, 1985-1987.
Program Manager, Community Services, George Mason University, 1983-1985.
Teacher, Fairfax County Public Schools, 1981-1983.
Teacher, Child Development Center of Northern Virginia, 1977-1980.

Recognitions

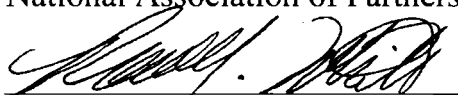
Outstanding Young Women of America Award, 1984.
American Vocational Association, Technology Education Division,
Professional Leadership Award, 1994.
International Technology Education Association, Children's Council,
Educational Leadership Award, 1996.

Certifications

Certificate of Advanced Graduate Studies in Education Administration.
Virginia Collegiate Professional Administering Certificate.
Virginia Collegiate Professional Teaching Certificate.

Professional Memberships

American Association of School Administrators.
American Association of University Women.
American Society of Association Executives.
American Vocational Association.
Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.
National Association of Partners in Education.



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