



2020 BUSINESS PROFESSIONALS OF AMERICA MERIT SCHOLAR EXAM FACT SHEET

General Information

Meaning of the Organization's Name

- **Business:** The field for which we prepare our students; emphasizes that we educate our members to work efficiently, not only in an office setting, but also in a wide variety of business situations.
- **Professionals:** Our students indicate they join Business Professionals of America to take advantage of a wide variety of professional development opportunities.
- **of America:** Symbolizes pride in our country and its free enterprise business system.

Pledge

We are met in a spirit of friendship and goodwill as we prepare for careers in a world-class workforce. We work together to develop professionalism and leadership through Business Professionals of America, and pledge our loyalty to our nation.

Official Colors

- **Navy Blue:** Signifies the success achieved through leadership and professionalism.
- **Tan:** Represents the bountiful fields of opportunity in America.
- **Red:** Symbolizes the friendship obtained through the teamwork of our organization.

Use of the Acronym

The acronym (BPA) is acceptable in casual conversation and personal correspondence to identify the organization. Once the name is spelled out in full, the acronym may be used in text. The acronym may not be used for cover titles or headlines.

Annual Theme

The 2019-2020 theme is "Capitalize Your Future".

Tag Line

Giving Purpose to Potential.

Mission Statement of Business Professionals of America

Our mission at Business Professionals of America is to develop and empower student leaders to discover their passion and change the world by creating unmatched opportunities in learning, professional growth and service.

Vision Statement of Business Professionals of America

Our vision for Business Professionals of America is: To be an innovator in Career and Technical Education, providing our members with opportunities for growth through education, competition, community service and personal development.

The Purposes of the Organization

- To assist local chapter members in leadership and development.
- To unite in a common professional bond without regard to race, creed, sex, or national origin of students enrolled in classes with business employment as their objective.
- To develop leadership abilities through participation in career and technical education, civic, recreational and social activities.
- To assist students in establishing realistic employment objectives.
- To create enthusiasm for learning.
- To promote high standards in ethics, workmanship and scholarship.
- To develop the ability of students to plan together, organize, and carry out worthy activities and projects through the use of democratic processes.
- To foster an understanding of the functions of labor, entrepreneurial and management organizations in the American free enterprise system.
- To develop competent, assertive leaders in business education.
- To develop and strengthen members' confidence in themselves and their work.
- To provide satisfactory social and recreational activities.
- To foster practical application of business education skills through competitions.

Emblem

The Business Professionals of America emblem is one of long-standing tradition. The emblem is to be used for ceremonial purposes only. The emblem will be used for the Emblem Building Ceremony and portions of the Opening Ceremony.

The four points of the BPA shield stand for Ambition, Leadership, Sociability, and Poise. The shield itself stands for honor and dignity, as well as the importance of business in America. The stripes represent education, citizenship, loyalty, patriotism, competency, and dependability. The bar represents the service provided by employees in business occupations. The quill and inkwell represent the stability of business occupations through the ages. Lastly, the torch represents worthy goals.



BPA Attire

The official BPA blazer is navy blue and has the logo on the left side.

The name tag is worn on the right side of the jacket.

The highest torch award pin earned is placed on the right lapel.

The national merit pin is placed on the right lapel.

The annual membership pin is placed on the left lapel.

The officer pin is placed on the right lapel above the nametag.

National Officers

The Executive Council is comprised of the National Officers for Secondary and Post-secondary Divisions. National Officers are elected annually at the National Leadership Conference.

The Executive Council for the Secondary Division includes a President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, Historian, and Parliamentarian.

The 2019-2020 Secondary National President is Emily White.

The Executive Council for the Post-secondary Division includes a President, Vice President, Secretary/Treasurer, and Parliamentarian.

The 2019-2020 Post-secondary National President is Cassandra Lindo.

National Officer Candidate Requirements

In order to run for National Office, a member must:

- Be in good standing for the current membership year, as of February 15th.
- Have at least a 2.75 grade point average for the current year.
- Be currently serving, or have served as an elected officer of a local, regional/area, or state association of BPA.

In order to represent the organization in a sufficient manner, National Officers are **required** to travel at least 3 times during their term of office.

- National Officer Training: **June/July** - *Columbus, Ohio*
- National Leadership Conference Planning: **January** - *Site of the National Leadership Conference during their term*
- National Leadership Conference: **May** - *Site of the National Leadership Conference during their term*

National Center

The National Center is located at 700 Morse Road Suite 201 in Columbus, Ohio.

There are currently nine staff positions at the National Center. The positions include: Executive Director, Director of Finance, Director of Education, Director of Leadership Development, Director of Marketing and Stakeholder Engagement, Director of Member Services, Director of Strategic Programs and Experiences, Director of Technology Integration, and Executive Staff Assistant.

National Center staff provide services to individual members, local chapters and state associations.

The National Center staff and National website (www.bpa.org) serve as your primary contacts for help with the Membership Registration System, the National Leadership Conference, WSAP Event Guidelines, National Officer Elections, and other National programs such as National scholarships, the Torch Awards Program and BPA Cares Program.

Webinars

BPA Webinars are offered monthly online to students and advisors. Webinars are designed to train, inform and gather feedback. Visit <https://bpa.org/events/webinar-series/>.

Social Media

BPA social media is designed for up-to-the-minute news flashes targeting advisors and students. The National Officer Team utilizes social media to encourage direct student participation in decision-making opportunities.

- Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/businessprofessionalsofamerica>
- Twitter: @National_BPA
- Instagram: bpanational
- Snapchat: @national_bpa
- LinkedIn: Business Professionals of America
- YouTube: Business Professionals-America

Student Certification Series

The Student Certification Series is an online program led by the National Officer Team that teaches members general and key information about Business Professionals of America. Visit <http://www.bpa.org/membership/StudentCert>.

The SOURCE

The SOURCE is a biweekly publication sent directly to BPA advisors. Content in these publications include organizational updates, partner communications, helpful resources, and more.

Miscellaneous

Business Professionals of America Week is a great opportunity to promote local chapters. It is the second full week of February in coordination with Career and Technical Education (CTE) month.

Business Professionals of America is a not-for-profit association.

Membership dues must be paid by February 15th of the current membership year in order to be eligible to compete at the national level.

Business Professionals of America has four divisions: Middle Level, Secondary, Post-secondary, and Alumni.

The Executive Council for the Alumni Division includes a President, President-Elect, and Secretary.

The 2019-2020 Alumni President is Darlene Uren.

The National Officer For A Day (NOFAD) program provides Middle Level members with the opportunity to shadow the National Officer Team for a day at the National Leadership Conference.

Programs

Workplace Skills Assessment Program

This program is conducted on regional, state, and national levels and tests competency in various areas of business/office occupations. The five categories of competition include Finance, Business Administration, Management Information Systems, Digital Communication & Design, and Management, Marketing & Communication. Members also have the opportunity to compete in Virtual events. There are nine virtual competitive events.

BPA Cares

This award program allows students to receive recognition at the national level for engaging in worthwhile projects. BPA Cares is divided into three categories, with 18 different awards offered (each award is outlined in the BPA Cares Handbook):

- **Service Learning Awards Program (5 awards)** – Community Service Award, Environmental Action/Awareness Award, Safety Awareness Award, Service Learning Individual Award, and Special Olympics Award
- **Special Recognition Awards Program (7 awards)**– BPA Marketing and Public Relations Award, BPA Merit Scholar Award, Chapter Activities Award of Excellence, Recruiter of the Year Award, Membership Explosion Award, Social Media Award, and The Professional Cup Award.
- **Professional Awards Program (6 awards)** – Advisor of the Year Award, Emerging Advisor of the Year Award, Emerging Professional of the Year Award, Hall of Fame Award, Outstanding Service Award, and Student of the Year Award.

Make sure to review the BPA Cares Handbook for details about each of the above awards, which can be found on the BPA website at:

<https://bpa.org/students/bpa-cares/>.

Special Olympics

Special Olympics is BPA's national service project. Chapters and individual members are encouraged to participate and/or volunteer in some capacity with the Special Olympics organization.

Torch Awards Program

The Torch Awards Program recognizes outstanding, actively involved members on the local, regional, state, and national levels. There are four award levels attainable through successful completion of activities in seven categories. The activity categories are: Leadership; Service; Cooperation; Knowledge; Friendship; Love, Hope, Faith and Patriotism. The below chart explains the four award levels:

Local Award	Executive	10 points per category
Regional Award	Diplomat	30 points per category
State Award	Statesman	50 points per category
National Award	Ambassador	70 points per category

Quality Chapter Distinction

This recognition is for chapters that have met the requirements of being actively involved in Business Professionals of America.

To be a Quality Chapter, a local chapter must fulfill all of the following requirements:

- Elect and be led by chapter officers.
- Conduct monthly chapter meetings.
- Have an integrated program of leadership training and practices.

Chapters must also fulfill at least four of the following seven criteria:

- Plan and adhere to a budget.
- Participate in the BPA Cares Program.
- Nationally register two advisors for your chapter.
- Increase chapter membership over the previous year.
- Participate in a chapter, state, or national fund-raising program.
- Participate in a conference outside the local chapter.
- Participate in the Torch Awards Program.

Conferences

National Leadership Conference (NLC)

The 2020 National Leadership Conference location is National Harbor, Maryland (Washington, D.C. area).

The 2021 National Leadership Conference location is Orlando, Florida.

The 2022 National Leadership Conference location is Dallas, Texas.

The 2023 National Leadership Conference location is Anaheim, California.

The 2024 National Leadership Conference location is Chicago, Illinois.

The 2025 National Leadership Conference location is Orlando, Florida.

The 2026 National Leadership Conference location is Nashville, Tennessee.

History of Business Professionals of America

1963 The Vocational Education Act authorizes a major expansion and redirection of vocational education. The need for a student organization for students enrolled in career/technical and office/business programs was recognized.

1964 The American Vocational Association conducts a study of 43 states indicating that 67% of the state vocational education supervisors wanted a career/technical youth group for students in office/business programs.

1965 Another study confirms the 1964 study findings revealing the desire for a career/technical youth group for students in office/business programs. State supervisors meet to develop guidelines for a youth group.

1966 In July, the Vocational Office Education Clubs of America (VOECA) takes form, founded by

youth group representatives to decide the most effective means to implement the office occupations youth group. After intensive effort, the Articles of Incorporation for the Office Education Association (OEA) is established. The first three states to affiliate were Iowa, Kansas, and Wisconsin.

1971 The Office Education Association establishes the National Center in Columbus,

Ohio. The Board of Trustees also approves the Alumni Division.

1973 OEA employs its first full-time Executive Director.

1982 OEA purchases the National Center located at 5454 Cleveland Avenue, Columbus, Ohio.

1983 In July, OEA conducts a dedication ceremony for the National Center.

1984 The Board of Trustees commissioned Market One (an integrated direct marketing agency in Beachwood, Ohio) to complete a marketing study of the OEA. The resulting long-range marketing plan recommended reform of the national image of the OEA.

1988 Using the recommendations of the marketing study—the OEA became Business Professionals of America.

1992 Business Professionals of America pays off the National Center and the mortgage is burned at a ceremony at the National Leadership Conference in Cincinnati, Ohio.

1998-2002 Delaware, Florida, New Mexico, Oklahoma, and Texas pilot a new BPA Middle Level program.

2002 The Board of Trustees approves the Middle Level Program.

2003 BPA Corporate approves the Middle Level Program. The BPA Middle Level Division is born.

2004 The Middle Level Division members participate in the National Leadership Conference.

2006 BPA celebrates its 40th birthday.

2009 The first rescheduling of a National Leadership Conference was in Dallas, Texas. This rescheduling was due to concerns with the H1N1 Influenza outbreak.

2010 The BPA pledge is changed from “We are met in a spirit of friendship and goodwill as we prepare for productive lives in business and office careers...” to “We are met in a spirit of friendship and goodwill as we prepare for careers in a world-class workforce...”.

2012 The first National Walk for Special Olympics is held at NLC in Chicago, IL.

2013 National virtual competitions are introduced online.

2015 The first National BPA Day of Service is held at NLC in Anaheim, CA.

2016 BPA celebrates its 50th Anniversary in Boston, MA and breaks the Guinness World Record for the largest gathering of people wearing tie-dye.

2019 Attendance surpasses 6,000 individuals for the first time at NLC in Anaheim, CA.

Governance

Board of Trustees

The Board of Trustees provides oversight to the creation, direction, and supervision of the activities of Business Professionals of America. The secondary and post-secondary presidents serve as voting members of the board. The chairperson is Cedric Bandoh.

State Association Advisory Council (SAAC)

Comprised of the State Association Advisors, the council advises the Board of Trustees on all State Association matters.

Classroom Educators Advisory Council (CEAC)

This advisory council consists of local advisors from each state and are appointed to serve as a liaison between the chapter advisors and the Board of Trustees. The council recommends changes and/or additions to the Workplace Skills Assessment Program and other programs.

National Business Advisory Council (NBAC)

The NBAC provides a liaison between business and industry and the Board of Trustees

Parliamentary Procedure and BPA By-laws

In order for voting to take place, a quorum must be present. A quorum consists of a majority of voting delegates.

The current edition of Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised will govern Parliamentary Procedure of all meetings.

The five types of motions are Privileged motions, Subsidiary motions, Main motions, Incidental motions, and motions that bring the question again before the assembly.

The Bylaws were adopted in April 1989 and last amended in May 2016.

The Bylaws may be amended by a two-thirds vote of the voting delegates at the National Leadership Conference if:

1. The amendment has been presented in writing by the state association proposing the amendment to all state associations of Business Professionals of America, the Business Professionals of America Executive Director, and the respective National President on or before December 15 preceding the National Leadership Conference;
2. The Executive Director and National President are responsible for making the proposed amendment known immediately to the Executive Council who must consider the proposed amendment during their next meeting;
3. The Executive Council has approved the amendment and the Executive Director has presented the proposed amendment to the Board of Trustees of Business Professionals of America, Inc. no less than sixty (60) days prior to the National Leadership Conference; and
4. The Executive Director has announced its approval by the Executive Council and presentation to the Board of Trustees to each state association and has posted the proposed amendment on the Business Professionals of America website no less than thirty (30) days prior to the National Leadership Conference.