

Kelley Baker, State Director, SkillsUSA Indiana, is a leader who embodies integrity, authenticity and dependability while supporting students throughout their High School journey. “I derive true satisfaction from seeing students engage, grow and emerge as confident individuals and leaders who are prepared for the workplace.” Born and raised in Indianapolis, Indiana, Kelley earned her Bachelor of General Studies and Minor in Criminal Justice from Indiana University—Purdue University Indianapolis (IUPUI). Kelley’s passion for Law Enforcement began in middle school as she thought that someday she would carry on the legacy of her Father and take his badge when he retired from the police force. Kelley worked at the Marion County Sheriff’s Department for a total of 10 years—3 years as a 9-1-1 Dispatcher and 7 years at the jail. She was the first female Corrections Officer certified for armed transportation of incarcerated individuals. After the Sheriff’s Department, Kelley accepted a position with the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) in 2002, as a Screener/Operator Center Logistics Associate. This was another first, as Kelley was in the first TSA group launched after 9/11.

After shifting to the Printing and Promotional Products industry for 6 years, Kelley was recommended to and found home at SkillsUSA Indiana. “I have always excelled at event management, partnership building, process improvement, team leadership and group training. When you instill drive, determination, accountability and confidence in others, results happen.” As the State Director, Kelley manages the membership of 3,200+ students and logistics for Regional and State Competitions. “I am a rule-follower, and I set high expectations for myself and others on my team. In turn, I expect the same from our student-members, teachers, and industry/business partners. Building trust and earning respect are keys to our success.”

SkillsUSA Indiana offers resources and lesson plans to the teacher-members who are dedicated to developing life-long soft skills in High School students. Communication skills, confidence, workplace readiness and employability skills provide our students with a framework which leads to opportunities they may have never dreamed possible. Through the various levels of competition, students are exposed to industry partners and may be presented with internships or apprenticeships while still in High School. “Experiences are what students remember. As we get them out of their comfort zone—they can envision a brighter future!”

“I have been with SkillsUSA Indiana since 2012 and being part of students’ lives and part of their stories is what continues to motivate and inspire me. They have put in tremendous time and effort and demonstrate amazing capabilities. I am confident that we are sending students out into the world equipped for a path they decide to choose. This could include college, trade or vocational schools or a direct route into business and industry.”

Kelley Baker’s competitive spirit, authentic demeanor, and drive to always do better, sets the bar for a healthy Association and Chapter of SkillsUSA. Throughout Kelley’s career, she has given back to the community and served in roles such as a Board Member, Board Chair or Volunteer for organizations such as Susan G. Koman Race for The Cure, Riley Children’s Hospital, and the TSA Holiday Gift Drive and Dinner. “The success of SkillsUSA Indiana is driven by our student-members, as they lead each other and are the face of the Association. We often hear the phrase, ‘The Red Coats are coming.’ I am grateful to be a driving force supporting them. As I am always telling our students, ‘Don’t be afraid to step out of your box and experience something new—as that is the only way that you will grow!’”