

2026-2027



A PROGRAM FOR ALL STUDENTS! GRADES 10, 11, AND 12

The Challenge Program, Inc.'s mission is to motivate high school students to develop the habits required to succeed in school and in their careers by building business/education partnerships.



MOTIVATION



CASH INCENTIVES



CONNECTION



CAREER READINESS

SINCE 2003

3 STEPS

MOTIVATE

PROGRAM ORIENTATION:

The Challenge Program, Inc. (TCP) connects each school with a local community business partner who sponsors the Program in the school for the year.

- Each fall, TCP will implement a Kick-Off assembly of the Program for the students. You will be sent a scheduling form in August.
- In order for the students and the business to benefit from the program, it would be most effective to be scheduled before the end of the first nine weeks of your school year.
- TCP & your school's Business Partner introduce the 5 award categories, connecting them to academic and career success. (see page 3 for the 5 award categories)
- FOR PA SCHOOLS: Our program satisfies PA CEW Standards 13.1.11; 13.2.11; 13.3.11. Surveys are available to be saved as artifacts for students' Career Readiness Portfolios.

CONNECT

CAREER READINESS AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT:

The Business Partner engages with students in one (or more) workforce development activities.

- Activities will be planned for students and educators (interviews, presentations, tours, business partner weeks).
- Students & educators learn about local career options and the training and/or education required for these jobs.
- Educators, especially in Pennsylvania, can use reflection surveys as Articles of Evidence for Career Standards and Goals compliance. Our program satisfies PA CEW Standards: 13.1.11; 13.2.11; 13.3.11.
- Students stay engaged beyond the classroom through TCP's social media, which motivates, acknowledges, and informs with content like Student of the Year updates, Commitment to Community Service announcements, giveaways, and activities.

REWARD

AWARD ACCOMPLISHMENT:

Through the sponsorship of your school's Business Partner, 15 awards are presented to the students for the school year. (Your school will select your award winners by the criteria on page 3.)

- 5 Seniors, 5 Juniors, and 5 Sophomores will receive an award certificate and a \$200 check in their name, per school.
- 2027 graduating seniors will receive their awards prior to graduation.
- 2026-2027 Underclassmen will receive their awards at the Kick-Off assembly in the Fall of 2026.

SELECTING AWARD RECIPIENTS

**THERE ARE 15 AWARDS
FOR EACH PARTICIPATING SCHOOL**

5 SENIORS ★ 5 JUNIORS ★ 5 SOPHOMORES

The Challenge Program, Inc.'s mission is to motivate students to develop habits that lead to success in both school and future careers.

To effectively inspire students, it's important that they believe they have a real opportunity to win. That's why TCP asks educators to randomly select winners from among the top eligible students in each grade for most award categories.

As a guideline, TCP recommends choosing from the top 10% of students in each category. However, we understand that each school is different; please feel free to adjust your process to fit your student body. We simply ask that you be consistent so that the process is fair.

NOTES:

- Once you schedule your Kick-off Assembly (fall)/Senior Awards Presentation (spring), you'll receive an email asking you to submit your winners' names.
- You must select 1 award winner for each category, per grade.
- Awards given at the Kick-off Assembly are based on the previous school year's accomplishments.
- If a student qualifies for an award in more than 1 category, you can put them in the drawing for each. Occasionally, a student may win more than 1 award.

**IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS OR CONCERNS, PLEASE
EMAIL THECHALLENGEPROGRAM@TCPINC.ORG OR
CALL [814-533-7401](tel:814-533-7401) x103.
PLEASE MAKE SURE TO INCLUDE THE NAME OF YOUR
SCHOOL IN YOUR EMAILS AND VOICEMAILS.**

5 AWARD CATEGORIES:

★ **WORK ETHIC AWARD: ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY**

- Students who consistently demonstrate the skills, behaviors, and attitudes necessary to succeed in today's workforce. This award honors students who are building a strong foundation for future success by developing career-ready skills.
- These students demonstrate reliability, initiative, problem-solving, and effective communication. They come prepared manage responsibilities with maturity, and adapt well to new situations.
- Teachers and employers should identify students who model these qualities in the classroom, workplace, or cooperative education settings.

★ **IMPROVEMENT AWARD: IMPROVEMENT, OVERCOMING CHALLENGES, AND DETERMINATION**

- Students who have shown significant improvement or demonstrated resilience in the face of challenges. They embody determination and personal growth.
- These students may have overcome difficulties, made steady improvements in academics, work habits, or personal circumstances, and refused to give up when things became difficult.
- For this award, look for students who overcame personal, academic, or social challenges; have shown determination and persistence even when struggling; or have demonstrated noticeable improvement in academics, skills, trade, or behavior.

★ **COMMUNITY IMPACT AWARD: COMMUNITY SERVICE, GIVING BACK, AND HELPING OTHERS**

- Students who demonstrate a strong commitment to serving their community and helping others. These students dedicate their time, energy, and talents to improve the lives of others, whether through organized service opportunities or everyday actions of compassion.
- The students go above and beyond to make a difference through volunteer work, service projects, or acts of kindness that strengthen their school and local community.
- For this award, look for students who actively participate in school/ community service or clubs, take the initiative to help or mentor peers, or demonstrate leadership qualities (role model, organizer, motivator of others).

★ **STEM AWARD: CREATIVITY AND NEW IDEAS**

- Students who demonstrate creativity, originality, and a willingness to try new approaches. They think outside the box, bring fresh ideas to challenges, and explore new ways of learning, working, or problem-solving.
- The students aren't afraid to take risks, experiment, and express their creativity. Whether through academics, the arts, technology, or leadership, these students show imagination and initiative. By pushing boundaries and exploring new ideas, they inspire others to look at challenges as opportunities for growth and progress.
- For this award, look for students who approach projects/ assignments with creativity or new ideas, find solutions to challenges or improve a process/ task; or apply knowledge in practical or hands-on ways (CTC projects, classwork, competitions).

★ **EXCELLENCE AWARD: EXCELLENCE IN TRADE OR GRADE**

- Students who demonstrate outstanding achievement in their academic studies or trade. Recipients consistently go above and beyond, showing mastery in their coursework, skill development, or training programs.
- These students demonstrate discipline, focus, and a commitment to quality in their work—whether in academics, technical skills, or hands-on learning. Their dedication to doing their best sets them apart as role models of achievement and inspires others to pursue excellence in their own paths.
- For this award, look for students who demonstrate success in their trade or classes, go out of their way to learn and grow, or go above and beyond in their classes or trade.

Note, senior awards are selected base on performance during the first 3 quarters of the school year and handed out in the spring. Awards for grades 10 and 11 are based on 4 quarters and handed out the following fall Kick-Off Assembly.

THE RISING STAR AWARD

Every year, The Challenge Program, Inc. hosts The Rising Star competition (previously known as Student of the Year). To enter, students that attend a TCP partnered school can fill out a survey and explain how The Challenge Program, Inc. and their business partner have affected them, and also answer the questions "Why Not Me? Why Not Now?"

OPEN TO ALL 10TH, 11TH, AND 12TH-GRADE STUDENTS!



Dakota Hanson, 2026 Award Winner

- ★ VISIT WWW.TCPINC.ORG TO ENTER
- ★ TELL US HOW TCP MOTIVATED YOU
- ★ 10 STUDENTS WILL WIN
 - \$ WINNER RECEIVES \$2,500
 - \$ TOP 2 RUNNERS-UP RECEIVE \$2,000 EACH
 - \$ 7 RUNNERS-UP RECEIVE \$500 EACH

THE INFIRST BANK COMMITMENT TO COMMUNITY SERVICE AWARD

We invite ALL students in grades 10-12 from our partnered schools to participate in this competition. The week-long competition will start on Monday, January 18, 2026, Martin Luther King Jr. Day, a national service holiday. This holiday empowers individuals, strengthens communities, bridges barriers, and addresses social issues, making it a perfect fit for the launch of this competition!



Nathan Malock, 2026 Award Winner

- ★ COMPETITION IS OPEN DURING THE WEEK OF MARTIN LUTHER KINGS BIRTHDAY
- ★ STUDENTS IN 10TH - 12TH GRADE CAN APPLY
- ★ VISIT WWW.TCPINC.ORG TO LEARN MORE

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The Challenge Program, Inc.



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