



## NEWS RELEASE

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### Washington DECA, Virtues Matter Share the LOVE to support student well-being

Washington State - Washington DECA and Virtues Matter launched #SharetheLOVEDECA, a initiative to help students build a culture of appreciation, connection and self-care. #SharetheLOVEDECA is designed to help students develop a positive mindset by cultivating virtues like *Gratitude, Courage, Resilience, Caring and Kindness*.

The initiative encourages us all to share *LOVE*, an acronym for the '*Language Of Virtues Everywhere*,' by reflecting on and focusing on the good they see. Virtues are universal positive qualities of character, the common elements of our highest values from cultures around the world.

The launch was kicked off with Virtues Matter and Washington DECA students joining Seattle Mayor Jenny Durkan on a Zoom call for a 'Virtues Pick', the reading and discussion of a virtue from the DECA Cards, a new addition to the Virtues Cards app. The team selected 'Resilience' and shared how it resonated with them during the time of COVID.

"We know students have faced challenges this past year unlike anything they've experienced before and have shown tremendous resilience," said Mayor Jenny Durkan. "Student organizations like DECA inspire students to be better connected with their school community, and Washington DECA and Virtues Matter continues to provide essential work around student mental health and well-being."

The Virtues Cards app is an easy-to-use tool designed to help bring out the best in ourselves and others. DECA high school students modified Reflections Cards from The Virtues Project with their own photos, revised text and selected inspiring quotes.

Zac Sherrer, Washington DECA student, past Area President and Vice President of Hospitality, states, "The DECA Cards and #SharetheLOVEDECA has been such an impactful part of my

life. This work is going to help my peers and me begin a discussion about Mental Health that has been far overlooked and unspoken.”

The partnership started in mid-2020 when Virtues Matter delivered a keynote at the virtual DECA Innovate 2020 annual conference. The team created 'missions' so students could practice long-term life skills during the immediate impact of COVID.

Dave Feldman, co-founder of Virtues Matter says, “Mental health and well-being is an urgent problem for our youth. It is critical for students to cultivate resilience to overcome adversity but also kindness or empathy to build strong relationships. Helping provide strategies and tools will help them in all areas of their lives.

The DECA Cards will be distributed in the Virtues Cards app on both Apple and Android platforms.

For more information, visit [www.wadeca.org/sharethelovedeca](http://www.wadeca.org/sharethelovedeca).

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**Washington DECA** ([www.wadeca.org](http://www.wadeca.org)) is a career and technical student organization that prepares innovative leaders and entrepreneurs to make a positive social and global impact through business and leadership. Washington DECA was founded in 1947 and is celebrating the 75th anniversary in 2022. The organization currently serves nearly 9,000 members in 150 schools across Washington State.

**Virtues Matter** is on a mission to uplift humanity by igniting personal, professional and organizational transformation. In addition to creating the Virtues Cards app, Virtues Matter offers workshops and retreats, online courses and specialized programs to help cultivate positive qualities of character in our personal lives, families, organizations and communities.

**The Virtues Project**, founded in 1991, was launched to help children and youth develop authentic self-esteem and encourage the practice of virtues in everyday life. It quickly expanded as a global movement for people of all ages.