

FBLA

When asked what it was like at nationals, Bennett said, "It was eye opening to see that many kids my age all in one city." His project was an e-business website similar to an eBay or Craigslist site. The idea was "a virtual garage sale."

Bennett said there wasn't much in the way of competition at state with only four teams, but there was at nationals. And, though he felt his team's project had the capability to win, they didn't make the final round. "There were so many people there from around the country and all around the world competing, like China, the Virgin Islands and Puerto Rico." Bennett explained that at any of the FBLA National competitions there will almost certainly be a southern state, referring to them as "powerhouse" states because of their history and strong presence; and, he says, they are difficult to beat.



REBECCA HERREN/SEASIDE SIGNAL

Seaside High School FBLA teacher and adviser Mike Verhulst with national attendee Derrick Bennett, a sophomore at the school.

Verhulst added, "I always tell students that at nationals winning the final round is like winning the Super Bowl. If you can go and win the second day, that's like the Super Bowl."

Approximately 12,000 FBLA students attended the national competition from June 26 to July 3.

What his first year experience taught Bennett was how to be a better leader, what he

needs to work on as an individual to get there. He said he watched some of the other teams and was impressed with how they were "on the mark" when answering questions, they were peppy and at ease. He came back with a strong conviction, already has an idea for his project and is ready to compete. Finding the time will be more difficult for this three-sport athlete, but he feels confident that the two-term class/club combination will make it easier to prepare for competitions and to take advantage of the second term to focus on making his project the best it can be.

When asked what his goal was for his second year in FBLA, Bennett grinned and said, "Win state and win nationals, naturally."

Bottom line, "students want to win nationals," Verhulst said, and he is excited to help them achieve that goal.

**Good luck
Seaside
High
School
Athletes!**



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