



April 16, 2012
NR12033

News Release

Contact:
Karen Gonya
Development and
College Relations Office
33 Edgemont Drive
Presque Isle, ME 04769
Phone: (207) 768-2809
Fax: (207) 760-1101
kgonya@nmcc.edu

NMCC Students Earn Awards at SkillsUSA Competition

Aroostook County - Four students from Northern Maine Community College were among the more than 800 high school and college students who competed in the SkillsUSA Maine State Conference held in Bangor on March 16. All four came home with medals after taking part in the written and hands-on components of the competition.

“It was important for our students to take part in the State competition, because it gave them a chance to showcase their talent, to demonstrate their skills and knowledge, and to increase their self-confidence when it comes to their skills,” said Pam Buck, NMCC computer-aided drafting instructor. “Students from four community colleges competed at the post-secondary level. Our students had the opportunity to see what other educational programs are doing in their fields and to observe other students working in their trades. Challenging themselves to compete will help them become better employees and leaders.”

Two of Buck’s students were among those who traveled to Bangor for the statewide competition. Brittany Cray of Presque Isle won a first place medal in technical drafting. Cray had to draw and dimension a machine vise using 3D CAD. Earning a third place medal in the architectural drafting competition was Ashton Bartley of Easton. He designed a three bedroom ranch house with environmentally conscious elements. Both Cray and Bartley are seniors in the computer-aided drafting program.

Also competing at the statewide event were Patrick Strainge of Stockholm and Albert Mauger of Hermon. Both are students in NMCC’s automotive collision repair program, Mauger a first year student and Strainge a senior. Mauger competed in the collision repair category and Strainge in automotive painting and refinishing. They each won a gold medal for their respective category.

Both had to complete a written estimate on a collision damaged vehicle. Mauger then had to repair a dent in a fender to demonstrate proper straightening techniques and use of body fillers. He also had to perform a plastic repair on a bumper cover, do some welding, and identify suspension and steering components. Strainge had to refinish a fender, including all prep work and applying a sealer, base coat and clear coat, as well as add tint to correctly match a paint color. These events had a time limit and competitors rotated through different stations.

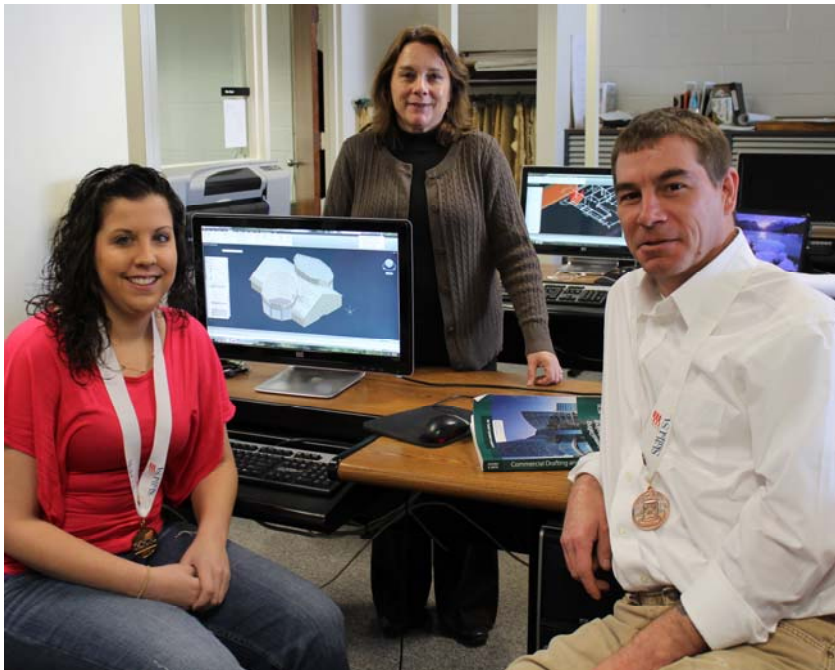
This competition is worthwhile for both students and instructors, according to NMCC automotive collision repair instructor Bob Collins. “Not only does it help students build confidence in themselves, but it gives instructors insight into how well a student can perform outside of the normal lab setting. I would highly encourage students and instructors from any program here at NMCC to get involved and compete at least at the State level,” said Collins.

The three first place finishers are eligible to compete in the national competition that takes place in Kansas City in June.

The College has not had a chapter for SkillsUSA, formerly known as the Vocational Industrial Clubs of America (VICA), in a number of years and is in the process of trying to get one re-established. The success of the small group that participated this year marks a promising start that can hopefully be expanded to include students from a broader range of programs in years to come.

SkillsUSA is a partnership of students, teachers and industry representatives, working together to ensure America has a skilled workforce. It is a national organization serving teachers and high school and college students who are preparing for careers in technical, skilled and service occupations, including health occupations, and for further education.

#####



Northern Maine Community College students Brittany Cray and Ashton Bartley proudly display the medals they won in the SkillsUSA State Competition held in Bangor. Cray came in first place in technical drafting, while Bartley came in third place in architectural drafting. With them is Pam Buck, their instructor in NMCC's computer-aided drafting program.



Northern Maine Community College automotive collision repair instructor Bob Collins joins the two students from his program that traveled to Bangor to take part in the SkillsUSA State Competition. Patrick Strainge (center) came in first place in automotive painting and refinishing, and Albert Mauger came in first place in collision repair.