



News Release

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NMCC Students Compete in SkillsUSA Maine Championships

Fourteen students from Northern Maine Community College (NMCC) competed in the SkillsUSA Maine Championships that were held on March 15th at Eastern Maine Community College (EMCC) and the United Technology Center in Bangor. In addition, due to space constraints at EMCC, NMCC hosted the welding and metal fabrication portion of the competition on February 28 where the Van Buren Technology Center and NMCC students competed.

The SkillsUSA Maine Championships is the state-level competition for college and high school students enrolled in trade, technical, and skilled service instructional programs including allied health occupations. SkillsUSA Maine is the single greatest event of industry and education volunteerism in the state every year. During the 2014 championships, 654 students and 97 advisors from 22 technical schools and 4 colleges competed in 71 different trade and leadership contests.

“SkillsUSA is the largest national student organization whose mission is to empower its members to become world-class workers, leaders and responsible American citizens,” said Pamela Buck, chair of the NMCC trade and technical department. “NMCC students get valuable experience competing at the state competition which allows them to showcase their talent, reinforces their technical competencies and promotes self-esteem.”

Earning first place gold medals were: Ben Sipe, drafting; Kurtis Gagnon, welding; Leo Gaghan, electrical; Brian Buck, plumbing; and Josh Pike, Zach Levesque and Brett Stratton, three-member team for welding and metal fabrication.

Bringing home silver medals were: Hillary Albert, t-shirt design; Zach Hamlin, auto collision; and Kyle Doody, electrical.

Additional students competing were: Zach Haggerty, drafting; Zachary deMontigny, Mike deMontigny and Kurtis Gagnon, welding and metal fabrication; and Van Buren Regional Technology Center students Joshua Pelletier, Derek Grivois and Alex Perreault, welding and metal fabrication.

For the welding and metal fabrication portion of the competition, which was held on the NMCC campus, teams were provided with contest drawings and welding procedure specifications for a shop cart and were given six and a half hours to fabricate the cart using only the limited materials that were provided. The drawings were created by Ben Sipe who is a student in the NMCC Computer Aided Drafting Program. Teams were judged on time management, ability to follow blueprints and the quality and craftsmanship of the welds in addition to several other criteria.

“For the high school students, this experience provides a glimpse of what it’s like to attend college and interact with students who are further along in their education,” said Gary Milton, head judge for SkillsUSA and welding teacher at Van Buren Regional Technology Center. “The high school students compete directly against college-level students, so the pressure is on to not only finish the project in the time allowed, but to produce a product that meets the standards for industrial application.”

The NMCC SkillsUSA chapter met throughout the year to prepare for the competition.

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NMCC students proudly display the medals they won at the SkillsUSA Maine Championships recently held in Bangor. Front row from left: Ben Sipe, gold in drafting; Josh Pike, (Absent teammates: Zach Levesque, Brett Stratton), gold in metal fabrication; Hillary Albert, silver in t-shirt design; Zach Hamlin, silver in auto collision. Back row from left: Kurtis Gagnon, gold in welding; Kyle Doody, silver in electrical; Zach

Haggerty, competed in drafting; Leo Gaghan, gold in electrical; and Brian Buck, gold in plumbing.