

Trials Will Select United States Semi-Finalists for International Competition

Leesburg, Va., October 26—Five finalists will participate in pre-trials that will select two contestants in welding—one of whom will go on to the 2007 WorldSkills competition to be held in Shizuoka, Japan.

The five semi-finalists will be competing at the 2006 FABTECH International & the American Welding Society (AWS) Welding Show, October 31-November 2, at the Georgia World Congress Center in Atlanta, Georgia. SkillsUSA and the American Welding Society (AWS) are sponsoring this competition. The competitors include:

Mohammed Farhat of Ann Arbor, Mich.
Josh Gillespie of Flatrock, Mich.
Westley Smith of Mifflinburg, Pa.
Jeremiah Garcia of Helper, Utah
Chance Pollo of Glenrock, Wyo.

To qualify for competition, the highest scoring high school and postsecondary contestants from the 2004 and 2005 SkillsUSA Championships participated in a runoff and submitted welding projects which were sent to industry for judging.

The following skills will be tested during the competition:

- SMAW/GMAW/GTAW/FCAW Test Plates/Pipe (RT and Bend Tests)
- Stainless Steel, and Aluminum Sheet Metal Weldments
- SMAW/GMAW/GTAW/FCAW Pressure Vessel (tested using water pressure at 1,000 PSI)

The final welding trial to select the competitor who will compete in Japan will be held in June 2007 during the SkillsUSA Championships in Kansas City, Mo. The winning competitor will represent the United States at the WorldSkills competition. In addition, he will receive a \$40,000, four-year scholarship from the AWS Foundation and sponsored by The Miller Electric Manufacturing Co., up to \$1,000 in AWS publications, a four-year complimentary full AWS membership and an AWS Certification, for which he qualifies at the Trials. Gold, Silver and Bronze medals will be awarded and all other competitors will receive a \$1,000 scholarship for books, tuition, or lab fees, a one-year complimentary full AWS membership and an AWS Certification, for which he qualifies at the Weld-Off.

AWS and SkillsUSA want to express thanks and appreciation to the following companies for loaning or donating supplies and equipment, making the Atlanta Weld-Off possible: Atlas Welding Accessories, Inc.; Bosch Power Tools; ESAB Welding & Cutting Products; Fibre-Metal

Products; G.A.L. Gage Co.; Hobart Institute of Welding Technology; Hobart Welding Products; Hornell Speed-glass; Hyd-Mech; ESAB Welding & Cutting Products; IRWIN Tools; LAPCO Electric Manufacturing Co.; Phoenix International, Inc.; Smith Equipment Co.; Servo Robot Corp.; The Lincoln Electric Co.; Torit Products-Donaldson Co.; Triangle Engineering; and, Welding Education & Consulting.

SkillsUSA is partnership of students, teachers and industry working together to ensure America has a skilled workforce. The national organization serves more than 284,000 high school and college students and professional members enrolled in training programs in technical, skilled, and service occupations. Membership in SkillsUSA offers leadership, citizenship and character development programs and activities to complement skill training. SkillsUSA has one-quarter million members annually in 13,000 chapters in 53 state and territorial associations.

The WorldSkills competition is conducted every other year by WorldSkills International, headquartered in Amsterdam, Holland. Contestants must be under the age of 23. The United States team will test their skills against champions from 44 other nations at the competition.

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