World-Class Winners Ready to Compete

SkillsUSA champions

FALL 2019

internationals the results from Russia
championships gold medalists
an essential new credential
national officers and local members helping others succeed
YOUR PATH
YOUR BRAND
YOUR STORE

Share on social
#SkillsUSAStore

Find us online at
www.SkillsUSAstore.org
features

WorldSkills USA
Direct from Kazan, Russia, it's SkillsUSA's best-prepared team ever. See how it paid off.
BY CRAIG E. MOORE

They've Got 2020 (Leadership) Vision
Meet the team of students who will help lead SkillsUSA into a new decade. Plus: Helping make others’ dreams a reality.
BY TIFFANY GOVENDER

Best of the Best
Who won gold at this year’s SkillsUSA Championships? It’s quite an impressive list, spanning 103 national competitions.
BY E. THOMAS HALL

A Good Read: Advisor of the Year
Jason McCuish’s students couldn’t find a children’s book on technical training, so they published one themselves.
BY KAREN N. KITZEL

Coded for Success
Two future engineers share what awakened their potential.
BY E. THOMAS HALL

departments

Ask Tim
BY TIM LAWRENCE

What’s New
BY TOM KERCHEVAL

Toolbox
BY TOM KERCHEVAL

Spotlight
BY HAYLEY UFFELMAN

Image
BY E. THOMAS HALL

On the Cover:
SkillsUSA Champion Evan Sapirman of Hillsborough, N.J. Photo by Lloyd Wolf.
champions

SkillsUSA

**SkillsUSA’s Official Magazine**
14001 SkillsUSA Way, Leesburg, VA 20176-5494
703-777-8810
www.skillsusa.org

**Magazine Staff/Office of Communications**
Tom Hall, Director
Karen Kitzel, Associate Director, Communications
Craig Moore, Senior Manager, Web/Technology
Tom Kercheval, Senior Manager, Audacious Technology/Communications
Jane Short, Senior Manager, Public Relations/Communications
Tiffany Govender, Manager, Communications
Hayley Uffelman, Specialist, Communications

**Office of the Executive Director**
Tim Lawrence, Executive Director
Heidi Walsh, Program Director
Dave Worden, Program Director, SkillsUSA Championships
Shelly Coates, Associate Director, Conference Management Services
Jim Kregel, Senior Manager, SkillsUSA Championships
Ashley Ridgeway, Manager, Conference Management Services
Kaitlin Youngs, Program Manager, Conference Management Services
Sandra Moore, Senior Administrative Assistant
Dennis Peale, Program Specialist, SkillsUSA Championships

**Administration and Finance**
Kim Graham, Director
Melissa Wilson, Associate Director, Human Resources
Sarah Utterback, Senior Manager, Accounting
Roxanne Hodge, Senior Customer Service Representative

**Business Partnerships and Development**
Cathy Arrington, Associate Director
Josie Wolfe, Manager, Fundraising
Helen Carafa, Program Specialist

**Education**
Kelly Horton, Director
Gayle Silvey, Associate Director
Gene Dudley, Senior Regional Manager
Patty Duncan, Senior Manager, Member Services and Assessments
Anita Foor, Senior Curriculum Manager
Kim Hegedus, Senior Manager, Educational Development
Sylvia Phillips, Senior Manager, Membership Growth and Development
Courtney Ferrell, Program Manager, Professional Development
Taryn Zeigler, Program Manager
Sandy Mueller, Program Specialist, Member Services
Laura Rauch, Program Specialist

**Board of Directors**
Jennifer Worth (American Association of Community Colleges)
Sam Bottom (Snap-an Incorporated)
Sarah Heath (Advance CTE)
Robert Kornack (Ohio)
Clay Mitchell (California/SkillsUSA State Directors Association)
Bryan Upton (Alabama)
Charles Wallace (Maryland)
Becky Warren (Kansas)
Dean Baker (Association for Career and Technical Education)
Maureen Tholen (3M/SkillsUSA Foundation)
Tony Ambroza (Garbari’s)
John Kett (LLA)
Cheryl Schafer (State Farm Insurance Companies)
Jason Scales (Lincoln Electric Co.)
Chris Tesmer (Newell Brands)
Rose Bauss (Toyota Motor North America Inc.)

**National Student Officers/Advisors**
High School
Makenna Eccles/Thomas Helguth (Texas)
Melissa Moreno/Nereida Lansman (Arizona)
Skylar Rearick/David Moe (Florida)
Justin Newton/Jeffrey Jones (Kentucky)
Jarod Harris/Kurt Holliday (Nebraska)
Anika Koopman/Rebecca Corda (Massachusetts)
Devon Cushing/Ami Hicks (Georgia)
Austin Huddleston/Sara Plozay (Ohio)
Ashley Olenkiewicz/Thomas Helgoth (Texas)
Miguel Nunez/Nereida Lansman (Arizona)

**College/Postsecondary**
Karlise Wilbur/Joshua Klemp (Rhode Island)
Jay Clifton/Shelley Hyde (Texas)
Emma Catanej/Vanessa McCullar (Alaska)
Taytum McGill/Regina Gilliland (Alabama)

**Advertising/Partnership Inquiries**
Cathy Arrington, 703-737-0627

---

**SkillsUSA champions online**
Experience SkillsUSA Champions interactively at: www.skillsusa.org. The digital format responds for viewing on all electronic devices. Teachers receiving this issue in hard copy are asked to share it with their students and others via email and social media. Then see even more champions on:

---

**SkillsUSA**

**Vol. 54, No. 1**

SkillsUSA Champions [ISSN 1040-4538] is published four times per year—Fall (October/November), Winter (December/January), Spring (February/March) and Summer (April/May)—by SkillsUSA Inc. at 14001 SkillsUSA Way, Leesburg, VA 20176. Periodicals postage paid at Leesburg, VA, and at additional mailing offices. Copyright 2019 by SkillsUSA. All rights reserved.

**POSTMASTER:** Send address corrections to SkillsUSA Champions, Attn.: Patty Duncan, 14001 SkillsUSA Way, Leesburg, VA 20176.

The names SkillsUSA, SkillsUSA Championships and SkillsUSA Champions, the SkillsUSA logo, emblem and slogan art are all registered trademarks of SkillsUSA Inc. All rights are reserved, and permission must be granted by the national headquarters of SkillsUSA prior to any use.

In keeping with a tradition of respect for the individuality of our members and our role in workforce development, SkillsUSA strives to ensure inclusive participation in all of our programs, partnerships and employment opportunities.
Opening Another Chapter

Executive Director Tim Lawrence has known SkillsUSA as a student member, instructor, industry partner and state director. Got a question? He can help.

Q: I’ve heard you are retiring from SkillsUSA. What’s next for you, and what changes are coming?
Tim: I began this column in 2001, when I became executive director of SkillsUSA, and what a journey it’s been ever since. Around the country and the world, I’ve met SkillsUSA students, teachers, partners and others who work daily to make our career and technical education system the best it can be. I’ve seen changes in curriculum, in technology, and in state educational agencies and federal administrations, and seen amazing growth in SkillsUSA’s membership and programs.

Still, some things remain the same, and these truths are what I’ll remember most: Those who engage in continuous personal growth, and who accept change and adapt to the circumstances and people they work with, tend to become leaders. Those who lead with passion tend to be successful. Those who lead by inspiration always rise to the top.

I have grown as a leader during my time with SkillsUSA, beginning as a welding student, through my path in the manufacturing industry, and as a teacher, state leader and national staff member. I am humbled and honored, along with an incredible support team in the national headquarters and in our state associations, to have led us through this historic time.

Honestly, leadership isn’t always easy, and it isn’t always fun. There have been worries that kept me up at night. I always led from my heart as well as my head, and I put everything I had into this role. SkillsUSA has been a major part of my life journey, so it is truly difficult to leave my position as your executive director. However, I am inspired by the hard work of our national board of directors to select an outstanding new leader. As she takes the helm, I expect the transition will be seamless for members and very positive for our teachers, partners and stakeholders. I look forward to new adventures and new roles in my life as I navigate my next chapter. It might include travels, volunteer work and who knows what else, but it will always be about serving others.

When students and teachers come to our National Leadership Center, I always tell them, “Welcome home.” I now say the same to your new executive director. Welcome home, Chelle Travis, and I hope the coming years are as good to you as the past 19 have been to me.

It has been a true honor to serve all of you and this life-changing organization. Thank you, my friends, for this incredible opportunity!

Got questions about SkillsUSA or other topics? Email anyinfo@skillsusa.org or send a letter to the address on the facing page.
Celebrating the Past, Welcoming the Future

November will be a bittersweet month for SkillsUSA, as we prepare to say goodbye to retiring executive director Tim Lawrence while happily welcoming new executive director Chelle Travis.

Travis — formerly the postsecondary director for SkillsUSA Tennessee and assistant vice chancellor for the Colleges of Applied Technology with the Tennessee Board of Regents — brings 17 years of experience in career and technical education to the role. “She is a proven leader in our space who strongly believes in the mission of our work,” says Lawrence.

Lawrence has been involved with SkillsUSA on every level, from student to teacher/advisor to state director. He’s served as SkillsUSA’s executive director for the last 19 years, and his leadership has taken the organization to new heights. For more on this leadership transition, visit: tinyurl.com/SkillsUSA-executive-director.

November will be a bittersweet month for SkillsUSA, as we prepare to say goodbye to retiring executive director Tim Lawrence while happily welcoming new executive director Chelle Travis.

Travis — formerly the postsecondary director for SkillsUSA Tennessee and assistant vice chancellor for the Colleges of Applied Technology with the Tennessee Board of Regents — brings 17 years of experience in career and technical education to the role. “She is a proven leader in our space who strongly believes in the mission of our work,” says Lawrence.

Lawrence has been involved with SkillsUSA on every level, from student to teacher/advisor to state director. He’s served as SkillsUSA’s executive director for the last 19 years, and his leadership has taken the organization to new heights. For more on this leadership transition, visit: tinyurl.com/SkillsUSA-executive-director.

Building a Perfect Circle

It hasn’t happened since 1979, but SkillsUSA’s National Leadership Center is getting a construction-based enhancement in the form of a new pavilion dubbed “SkillsUSA Champions Circle.” Many contractors and trade associations donated equipment and labor to prepare the building site. Once prepared, CAD instructor Jeff Jones and his students — all from Webster County Area Technology Center in Dixon, Ky. — began construction. Visiting officers from SkillsUSA Virginia helped, too, and the design itself was conceived by students and instructors from SkillsUSA Oklahoma. For photos and video, visit: tinyurl.com/skillsusa-circle.

Former SkillsUSA state director Chelle Travis has been named the new executive director for SkillsUSA. Travis takes the helm in November.
A New Generation of Skilled Pros

Boomers, Gen X, millennials ... every generation has its own unique reputation. “Generation T” is different. It’s a national movement launched by Lowe’s Home Improvement to address the widening skilled trades gap, and that “T” stands for “trade skills.” SkillsUSA has joined the movement, and the even-more-good-news is that all ages (and generational labels) are welcome. A key component of Generation T is a national marketplace connecting qualified job-seekers to skilled-trades employment opportunities. What will members of Gen T be known for? Success. Learn more at: wearegenerationt.com.

World-class effort gains recognition on world stage

Tim Lawrence is about to retire as SkillsUSA’s executive director, but that’s not stopping him from earning more awards. Recently in Kazan, Russia, WorldSkills president Simon Bartley presented Lawrence with the WorldSkills Fellowship Award during the international competition.

The award is given “in recognition of an outstanding contribution to WorldSkills and a commitment to inspiring and advancing the prospects of young people around the globe.” This marks only the second time in the 73-year history of WorldSkills that the award has been given.

SkillsUSA has been sending a team to the biennial WorldSkills Competition since 1975. See Page 11 for a full report on the 2019 WorldSkills USA team.

Left to right: Mark Klein, Jimmy Garoppolo, Ethan Harrison, Tony Garoppolo, Tim Lawrence

Photo courtesy of Klein Tools
SkillsUSA’s NLSC SETS RECORDS AND STANDARDS

Congratulations someone for “getting bigger every year” isn’t usually considered a compliment. That’s not true for SkillsUSA’s National Leadership and Skills Conference (NLSC), which doesn’t just get bigger with every successful trip the earth makes around the sun, but better. The 55th NLSC, held in Louisville, Ky., this past June, didn’t just keep the tradition alive, it set new standards to live up to.

For starters, the event set an all-time attendance record, with 11,136 registrants and an estimated total attendees closing in on 20,000. The SkillsUSA Championships boasted the most competitors ever, with 6,417. SkillsUSA TECHSPO — the largest career and technical education trade show in the nation — reached behemoth proportions, as members of industry and education sought to connect with the most highly skilled students in the nation.

The NLSC welcomed a host of VIPs, too, including U.S. Deputy Secretary of Education Mick Zais. “This is an amazing display of all-American talent,” Zais said after touring the contest floor. “It’s really been uplifting and inspirational.”

Those words could be used to describe so many other moments of the conference that can’t be quantified by a spreadsheet. From the thrills of the Opening Ceremony to the fulfillment of the community service event that saw students build and deliver bikes to underprivileged kids ... from the breathtaking expanse of the skilled and leadership competitions to the elation of the Awards Ceremony ... the 55th NLSC won’t be forgotten any time soon. For more photos and video, visit: tinyurl.com/nlsc19-media.
2019 NLSC HONOREES
Advisor of the Year: Jason McCuish of Lynn (Mass.) Vocational Technical Institute (story, Page 23)

Alumni Pioneer of Excellence Award: Terry Robinson, graphic designer, instructor and national alumni chair, El Reno, Okla.

Ernie Gary SkillsUSA Championships Volunteer of the Year: Mark Galland, longtime cluster chair, Springfield, Mo.

Honorary Life Members: Chris Arvin, former SkillsUSA board president, Caterpillar Inc.; Jim Bullington, longtime SkillsUSA supporter, Oklahoma Department of Career and Technical Education; Eric Gearhart, former SkillsUSA development director; Darren Gibson, former state association director representative to the SkillsUSA board of directors, Oklahoma; Brent Kindred, former SkillsUSA board president, Wisconsin; George Laubmeier, longtime alumni and national conference volunteer from Wisconsin; Wayne Lee, advisor of many successful chapters in North Carolina over almost 30 years; Ann Schreiber, 33-year employee of SkillsUSA communications office

Models of Excellence First-Place Chapters: Lynn (Mass.) Vocational Technical Institute; Geary (Okla.) High School; Norwalk (Calif.) High School

Outstanding Alumni Achievement Award: Bryan Glispie, longtime volunteer and broadcasting professional, California

Outstanding Educators: Troy Barry, Western Dakota Technical Institute, Rapid City, S.D.; Kirstie Christopherson, North Medford (Ore.) High School; Chip Harris, Tennessee State University, Nashville; Pratima Patil, Somerset County Vocational School, Bridgewater, N.J.; Richard Stephens, Worcester Technical High School, Newark, Md.

President’s Volunteer Service Award: 75 individuals and 10 teams; for the complete list, go to: pvsa.skillsusa.org


Torch Carrier Award: Maureen Tholen, SkillsUSA Foundation Committee chair, from WorldSkills USA lead sponsor 3M
Powerful ideas come from fresh perspectives.

At Magna, we are committed to nurturing bold young minds in skilled trades. By helping students learn today, they will gain new perspectives to lead tomorrow.

To transform the future of mobility and automotive, we need to invest in it.

We are honored that our support can help SkillsUSA empower young thinkers. And to all of the teams participating in 2019 SkillsUSA Competition:

Thank you for inspiring us.
Hard work pays off as this year’s SkillsUSA-fielded team makes giant strides in international competition.
Facing page: The All-American team in Kazan. This page, clockwise from top: high scorers Dylan Wertz, Paul Danenberg, Ryan Meppelink, Rebekah Hagberg and Ryan Fincher with Tim Lawrence; Meppelink and other medalists; Mawadda Abuhamda and Jason McGee in Cyber Security; D.J. Fors in Auto Body Repair.
WorldSkills USA team members recently returned from Kazan, Russia, where for four days they tested their skills against 1,354 competitors from 63 member nations.

At this year’s WorldSkills Competition, the U.S. team moved up 15 places in the rankings compared to the previous WorldSkills Competition in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates. Based on total points scored overall, Ryan Meppelink of Zeeland, Mich., was awarded a bronze medal for Heavy Vehicle Technology and Best in Nation for having the highest score for the team.

“It was a great honor to represent my nation,” Meppelink said in a subsequent interview with Transport Topics. “The competition was very tough, but I felt very good about my performance.”

Medallions of Excellence, awarded to competitors who earn 700 out of 800 possible points, were earned by Paul Danenberg of Boise, Idaho, in Automobile Technology; Ryan Fincher of Cedartown, Ga., in Welding; Rebekah Hagberg of Bloomington, Ill., in Hairdressing; and Dylan Wertz of Tiffin, Ohio, in Car Painting.

The team of 22 former national champions narrowly missed earning four additional Medallions of Excellence.

“The experience was unforgettable,” Tim Lawrence, SkillsUSA’s executive director, said. “To experience the unique Russian culture and meet workforce development experts from every corner of the globe truly expands your mind to new possibilities and perspectives.”

Besides the competition, a highlight of the week’s activities was the “One School — One Country” cultural exchange. Students ages 11-15, from 58 institutions in Kazan and the surrounding district of the Republic of Tatarstan, met representatives of the WorldSkills national teams.

The U.S. team visited ORT “Mishpah-teinu” Secondary School No. 12. While there, the team participated in cultural dances, crafts and field day-style events.

About 60 Americans made the trip to Russia, including supporters and the technical experts who trained the team over the past two years. The White House sent SkillsUSA 22 individual cards to congratulate each of the team members.

Intensified training and public relations efforts for the 2019 team paid off. From October 2018 to date, over 500 unique television, print and online news stories have appeared (the equivalent of $1.85 million in advertising).

The team of 22 former national champions narrowly missed earning four additional Medallions of Excellence.

ON THE WEB

- Learn more about the WorldSkills USA team: www.worldskillsusa.org
- Check out all the pictures from the 2019 event: http://bit.ly/WorldSkillsUSAPhotos
- Follow this and future WorldSkills USA teams on social media: @WorldSkillsUSA
The 2019 WorldSkills USA team was the largest SkillsUSA has ever fielded. It had the greatest international competition experience, training and time commitment of any team that has competed for the United States. The first WorldSkills competition was held in 1950 in Madrid, Spain. In 1973, SkillsUSA (then called the Vocational Industrial Clubs of America) was recognized as the official U.S. representative to WorldSkills.

WORLDSKILLS USA SPONSORS

LEAD SPONSOR

3M

PROUD SPONSORS

Ferguson Lowe’s

PROUD PARTNERS

Welding
Ryan Fincher, 21
Cedartown, Ga.

CNC Milling
Scott May, 19
Port Huron, Mich.

Auto Body Repair
David “D.J.” Fors, 19
Lunenburg, Mass.

Automobile Technology
Paul Danenberg, 21
Boise, Idaho

Baking
Daylan Torres, 20
Fall River, Mass.

Bricklaying
Kelby Thornton, 19
Midland, N.C.

Cabinetmaking
Ethan Harrison, 18
Blackfoot, Idaho

Catering
Julia Spondike, 20
Lorain, Ohio

Cyber Security
Mawadda Abuhamda, 17
Chandler, Ariz.

Cyber Security
Jason McGee, 18
San Tan Valley, Ariz.

Graphic Design Technology
Anthony Moore, 19
Adrian, Mich.

Hairdressing
Rebekah Hagberg, 18
Bloomington, Ill.

Heavy Vehicle Technology
Ryan Meppelink, 20
Zeeland, Mich.

Mechanical Engineering
Benjamin Campbell, 19
Nampa, Idaho

Mechatrónicos
Ryan Hittepole, 20
Albemarle, N.C.

Mechatronics
Curt Love, 20
Oakboro, N.C.

Plumbing and Heating
Timothy Girouard, 19
Southampton, Mass.

Print Media
Brittany Whitestone, 20
Westminster, Md.

Restaurant Service
Robert “Colt” Schultz, 17
League City, Texas

Web Design
Matthew Vreman, 20
Parrish, Fla.
EVERY DREAM HAS A JOURNEY
EVERY CAREER HAS A PATH
WE CAN HELP YOU ON YOUR WAY

The Marine Corps Scholarship Foundation provides need-based scholarships to the children of Marines enrolled in accredited career and technical education programs.

Application and eligibility criteria are available at www.MCSF.org
They’ve Got 2020 Leadership
This newly elected officer team is ready to spread the word about SkillsUSA and lead our members into a new decade

By Tiffany Govender

At this June’s National Leadership and Skills Conference, the 2019-20 SkillsUSA national officers were elected by delegates from across the nation. In July, the team reconvened at SkillsUSA’s national headquarters for a week of intensive training aimed at preparing them for their new roles as the organization’s representatives.

During the coming year, the team will connect with leaders from industry and government, help facilitate national events and advocate nationwide for the value of career and technical education (CTE). The officers are excited to support the organization by sharing stories of how their SkillsUSA experience has provided them with what’s needed to develop their interests into individual career paths.

“Career and technical education provides opportunities to express who we are through our trade, and to develop our passions and support tomorrow’s workforce,” says Miguel Nunez, SkillsUSA Region 5 vice president.

Nunez’s view is shared by Melissa Moreno, high school vice president at large, who emphasizes that CTE “isn’t only about the students, it’s about our country and providing the skilled workforce that it deserves.”

Adds Skylar Rearick, high school secretary: “SkillsUSA and career and technical education have given students across the country the ability to shape not only their own futures but also the future of our nation.”

SkillsUSA is helping to build America’s future by opening doors for students to develop their dreams. Armed with their extensive experience and drawing on their diverse backgrounds, this team is ready to spread the word.
Get to know the new
National Officer Team

On the facing page: (1) College/postsecondary secretary Emma Cates is a cosmetology student at Oklahoma’s Indian Capital Technology Center. (2) Culinary arts student Jay Clifton attends El Centro College in Dallas and serves as college/postsecondary vice president. (3) Devon Cushing, Region 2 vice president, is a graphic design student at Troup High School in LaGrange, Ga. (4) High school president Makenna Eccles studies health science at Porter (Texas) High School. (5) Jarod Harris, high school parliamentarian, studies drone technology and videography at Seward (Neb.) High School. (6) Exercise science student Austin Huddleston attends Upper Valley Career Center in Piqua, Ohio, and is Region 3 vice president. (7) Region 1 vice president Anika Koopman is a health services student at Blackstone Valley Regional Vocational Technical High School in Upton, Mass. (8) Tatum McGill studies salon and spa management at Northeast Alabama Community College in Rainsville and is college/postsecondary parliamentarian. (9) High school vice president Melissa Moreno is a photography student at San Luis (Ariz.) High School. (10) Justin Newton, high school treasurer, studies computer aided drafting at Webster County High School in Dixon, Ky. (11) Region 5 vice president Miguel Nunez studies photography and emergency medical services at San Luis (Ariz.) High School. (12) Ashley Olenkiewicz, Region 4 vice president, is a health science student at Porter (Texas) High School. (13) Engineering student Skylar Rearick attends Lyman High School in Longwood, Fla., and serves as high school secretary. (14) College/postsecondary president Karlisle Wilbur is a graphic design student at Johnson & Wales University in Providence, R.I. •
Emma Cates is no stranger to working for her dreams. When she first envisioned getting a cosmetology license and owning her own business, her plans were met with concerns from her parents and high school counselor.

Despite being accepted to a college program in her sophomore year of high school, she had been unsure of how this path would lead to her dream job. Cates did know that she had a deep interest in cosmetology. She was able to gain her parents’ support to enroll in a cosmetology program but continued to face resistance from her school counselor.

Undeterred, Cates found a new counselor, who enrolled her at Indian Capital Technology Center in Muskogee, Okla. There, the cosmetology instructor introduced Cates to SkillsUSA and asked her to consider running for national office.

Cate’s response was immediate. She told her instructor, “I want to do that because I don’t want anyone else to go through what I had to go through, and I want to let other people know that career and tech schools are just as great as college.”

Read more at: tinyurl.com/national-officers.
“Good job!” to the winners in the 103 events at this year’s SkillsUSA Championships. For names of silver and bronze medalists, and those in teams of three or more, go to: www.skillsusa-register.org/rpts/EventMedalists.aspx

COLLISION DAMAGE APPRAISAL: Cayden Bailey, Utah Valley University, Orem, Utah; Trientae Enyart, Dixie Technical College, St. George, Utah

COLLISION REPAIR TECHNOLOGY: Abagaye Boden, Aims Community College – Windsor, Greeley, Colo.; Noah Borger, Vanguard-Sentinel CTC – Sentinel Campus, Tiffin, Ohio


COMMUNITY SERVICE ACTION PROJECT: Cody Retz/Hannah Retz, Bossier Parish Community College, Bossier City, La.; Camron McCuish/Luis Pineiro, Lynn (Mass.) Vocational Technical Institute, Lynn, Mass.


CRIME SCENE INVESTIGATION: (teams) Catawba Valley Community College, Hickory, N.C.; Charito Career and Technical Center, Wood River Junction, R.I.

CRIMINAL JUSTICE: Drake Feriancek, Northeast Wisconsin Technical College, Green Bay; Carly Bohm, Livingston Area Career Center, Pontiac, Ill.

CULINARY ARTS: Nora Engleken, The Culinary Institute of America, Hyde Park, N.Y.; Reis Miller, Center for Academic Achievement, Overland Park, Kan.

CUSTOMER SERVICE: Drew Duboff, Johnson and Wales University, Providence, R.I.; Veda Kota, Somerset County Academy of Medical Sciences, Bridgewater, N.J.

CYBERSECURITY: Josh Bruza/Joshua Husted, Francis Tuttle Technology Center – Portland Campus, Oklahoma City, Okla.; Bret Hile/Ethan Michalak, Martin Luther King High School, Riverside, Calif.

DENTAL ASSISTING: Nesta Pettit-Ton, Lancaster County Career and Technology Center, Willow Street, Pa.; John Robert Dorion, Blackstone Valley RYTHS, Upton, Mass.


EASEL USA CHAMPIONS: Fall 2019

GOLD MEDALISTS 2019

3D VISUALIZATION AND ANIMATION: Keith Takens/Ben Waters, Ferris State University; Grand Rapids, Mich.; Jose Lopez/Jedediah Ricks, Pima County Joint Technical Education District @ Master Pieces, Tucson, Ariz.

ACTION SKILLS: Humberto Rodriguez, Eastern New Mexico University – Roswell; Matthew Dahl, Azie (Texas) High School


ADVERTISING DESIGN: Austin Rains, Sowela Technical Community College, Lake Charles, La.; Brooklyn Lugar, Fort Wayne (Ind.) Community Schools Career Academy

AMERICAN SPIRIT: (team) Buckeye Hills Career Center, Rio Grande, Ohio

ARCHITECTURAL DRAFTING: Andrew McCoy, Calhoun Community College, Decatur, Ala.; Jasmine Vachas, Lancaster County Career and Technical Center, Brownstown, Pa.


AUTOMATED MANUFACTURING TECHNOLOGY: (teams) Southwestern Illinois College, Belleville; Norco (Calif.) High School

AUTOMOTIVE REFINISHING TECHNOLOGY: Kaiden Brier, Aims Community College – Windsor, Greeley, Colo.; Caden Hoover, Vanguard-Sentinel Career and Technology Center (CTC) – Sentinel Campus, Tiffin, Ohio

AUTOMOTIVE SERVICE TECHNOLOGY: Ian Gregor, Pikes Peak Community College, Colorado Springs, Colo.; Xander Bachison, Ogden (Utah) High School

AVIATION MAINTENANCE TECHNOLOGY: Max Pingree, Salt Lake Community College, Salt Lake City; Raj Gounder, Aviation Career and Technical Education High School, Queens, N.Y.

BARBERING: Misael Flores, Pickens Technical College, Aurora, Colo.; Jose Westerband Ramos, School Dr. Maria Socorro Lacot, Guayama, Puerto Rico


BROADCAST NEWS PRODUCTION: (teams) Bossier Parish Community College, Bossier City, La.; Cambridge High School, Milton, Ga.

BUILDING MAINTENANCE: Trevor Hedges, Moore Norman Technology Center, Norman, Okla.; Kiara Clay, Vanguard-Sentinel CTC – Vanguard Campus, Fremont, Ohio


CAREER PATHWAYS SHOWCASE: (teams) Anderson W Clark Magnet High School, La Crescenta, Calif.; Dubiski Career High School, Grand Prairie, Texas; Edgecombe Community College, Tarboro, N.C.; Greater Altoona Career and Technology Center, Altoona, Pa.; Nash Community College, Rocky Mount, N.C.; San Benito (Texas) High School; Somerset County Academy of Medical Sciences, Bridgwater, N.J. (two medals)

CARPENTRY: Bret Gleason, Metropolitan Community College, Omaha, Neb.; Jacob Stage, Bedford (Va.) Science and Technology Center – Chapter Business Procedure (teams)


COMMUNITY SERVICE ACTION PROJECT: Cody Retz/Hannah Retz, Bossier Parish Community College, Bossier City, La.; Camron McCuish/Luis Pineiro, Lynn (Mass.) Vocational Technical Institute, Lynn, Mass.


CRIME SCENE INVESTIGATION: (teams) Catawba Valley Community College, Hickory, N.C.; Charito Career and Technical Center, Wood River Junction, R.I.

CRIMINAL JUSTICE: Drake Feriancek, Northeast Wisconsin Technical College, Green Bay; Carly Bohm, Livingston Area Career Center, Pontiac, Ill.

CULINARY ARTS: Nora Engleken, The Culinary Institute of America, Hyde Park, N.Y.; Reis Miller, Center for Academic Achievement, Overland Park, Kan.

CUSTOMER SERVICE: Drew Duboff, Johnson and Wales University, Providence, R.I.; Veda Kota, Somerset County Academy of Medical Sciences, Bridgewater, N.J.

CYBERSECURITY: Josh Bruza/Joshua Husted, Francis Tuttle Technology Center – Portland Campus, Oklahoma City, Okla.; Bret Hile/Ethan Michalak, Martin Luther King High School, Riverside, Calif.

DENTAL ASSISTING: Nesta Pettit-Ton, Lancaster County Career and Technology Center, Willow Street, Pa.; John Robert Dorion, Blackstone Valley RYTHS, Upton, Mass.


EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION: Sylvia Turner, Ocoee Fall Line Technical College, Dublin, Ga.; Audrey Hughes, Paso Robles (Calif.) High School
INTERACTIVE APPLICATION AND VIDEO GAME DEVELOPMENT: Declin Lozano, Eastern Oklahoma County Technology Center, Choctaw; Kyley Boyles/Jacoby Pasquin, Pierce County Skills Center, Puyallup; Wash. INTERNET WORKING: Vincent Manzo, Manatee Technical College, Bradenton, Fla.; Vinnie Lotona, Maricopa (Ariz.) High School.

JOB INTERVIEW: Rebecca Gaston, Gadsden State Community College, Gadsden, Ala.; Bryce Scott, Mid-Maine Technical Center, Waterville JOB SKILL DEMONSTRATION A: Kyle Blutt, East Mississippi Community College, Mayhew; Meghan Proulx, B.M.C. Durfee High School, Fall River, Mass.; David Hinojosa, Kennedy Middle School, Pharr, Texas JOB SKILL DEMONSTRATION OPEN: Victoria Washington, Carteret Community College, Morehead City, N.C.; Amy Andrew, Cuyahoga Valley Career Center, Brecksville, Ohio; Naomi Domer, Riverside Middle School, Watertown, Wis.


OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY – MULTIPLE: (team) South Pasadena (Calif) High School OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY – SINGLE: (team) Lynnwood (Calif) High School OPENING AND CLOSING CEREMONIES: (teams) Northeast Alabama Community College, Rainsville; North Platte (Neb) High School; Kitty Hawk Middle School, Universal City, Texas OUTSTANDING CHAP- TERS: (teams) Catawba Valley Community College, Hickory, N.C.; Buckley Hills Career Center, Rio Grande, Ohio


QUIZ BOWL: (teams) Ogeechee Technical College, Statesboro, Ga.; Somerset County Academy of Medical Sciences, Bridgewater, N.J.

RELEAS TECHNICAL MATH: Paul Vu, Bossier Parish Community College, Bossier City, La.; Abdul Uddin, Passaic County Technical Institute, Wayne, N.J. RESIDENTIAL SYSTEMS INSTALLATION AND MAINTENANCE: Bryant Bunyard, Meridi- an Technology Center, Stillwater, Okla.; Dalton Whittle, Waynesville (Mo.) Career Center


SCREEN PRINTING TECHNOLOGY: James Sullivan, Illinois Central College, East Peoria; Shauna Ford, Shawshen High School, Billerica, Mass. SHEET METAL: Andrew Mahr; Des Moines Area Community College, Ankeny, Iowa; Jakob Dixon, Indiana (Pa.) County Technology Center

TEAM ENGINEERING CHALLENGE: (team) Nellie N. Coffman Middle School, Cathedral City, Calif. TEAMWORKS: (teams) Gabriel Lopez, Georgia Northwestern Technical College, Rock Spring, Ga.; Berks CTC – East Campus, Oley, Pa.


WELDING FABRICATION: (teams) Utah State University Eastern, Price; Maple Mountain High School, Spanish Fork, Utah WELDING SCULPTURE: Caleb Harris, Tennessee College of Applied Technology – Oneida Huntsville, Huntsville, Tenn.; Porter Kwatkowski, Davis Technical College, Kaysville, Utah
Fast Track to the Trades

We’ll guide you, step-by-step, on your journey to a successful career in the trades.

Everything you need is right here!

www.ExploreTheTrades.org

The skilled trades of plumbing, heating, cooling and electrical keep our country running. Jobs in these industries are in high demand and come with great pay, career opportunities and job security.

At Explore The Trades, we want to help you discover that these careers aren’t just a choice – they’re the best choice.
The best teachers show you where to look but don’t tell you what to see. Instructor Jason McCuish hopes you’ll look at his amazing pupils and see for yourself how impressive they are.

While McCuish likes to keep the focus on students at Lynn (Mass.) Vocational Technical Institute (LVTI), he earned his own time in the spotlight when named 2019’s SkillsUSA Advisor of the Year.

The 15-year teaching veteran became a SkillsUSA advisor five years ago, starting with 12 students in a barely noticed program. He increased involvement as he transformed the culture of his classroom, enhanced the reputation of the school and affected the lives of many individual students in the process.

McCuish’s efforts to motivate students resulted in three national gold medals at the SkillsUSA Championships: a 2019 gold medal in Community Action Project plus 2017 and 2019 gold medals in Community Service. His school has also been recognized three times in SkillsUSA’s Chapter Excellence Program as a Model of Excellence (MOE) winner: in 2019 for the technical skills component; in 2017 for personal skills; and as a Top 24 school in 2015, the first year of the program.

McCuish cites with pride his chapter’s winning project this year in the area of technical skills grounded in academics.
The chapter published a children’s book called *Tech Goes to Tiger Town*. The book was shared with kindergarten students to encourage them to think about technical careers like culinary arts, electrical trades, engineering and nurse assisting.

“Every year, we try to identify something that is lacking within our city,” McCuish says. In the past, his chapter has focused on hunger, substance abuse prevention to address a heroin epidemic, and homelessness among local veterans.

**A 20,000-book giveaway takes off**

This year, McCuish and his students targeted literacy and raised funds to give away 20,000 books to the community. When they couldn’t find a book about career and technical education, they wrote one. The students drafted, illustrated, published and distributed the book, based on their school’s training programs.

Live readings were part of the fun as the students visited classrooms and brought the book’s characters to life. The students practiced their SkillsUSA Framework skills as they mastered the technical skills needed to publish a book.

McCuish explains that his chapter is focused around leadership and service, but it also strives to enhance the training. “We started doing community outreach, and that’s really what led us to start working with industry, which is now helping improve our technical programs.”

He’s found the influence of a good teacher can inspire hope that goes well beyond high school. A surrogate dad to students who don’t have family support, McCuish says these are the ones who tell him they want to pay it forward and become teachers themselves.

“SkillsUSA has changed how I approach teaching, how we serve the community, and it has given me a platform for awareness. My students work hard because they know they can push me — and they know I’m willing to push for them.”

Through each project, students also bring more positive awareness to SkillsUSA and to their school.

Born and raised in Lynn, McCuish always enjoyed school and knew he wanted to teach someday. After college in Boston, he returned to Lynn as an English instructor in the public schools. His teaching career is now a passion that can’t and won’t stop. He enjoys fostering a love of learning and a drive to succeed in his students, no matter their career paths.

“I can say that choosing Lynn Tech was the best decision of my young life,” says David Barrios, his former chapter president. Another student, Kevin Gomes, adds, “He ensures that everyone feels heard and included. He created a culture of excellence at our school and pushed me until I saw it within myself.”

McCuish says the book is dedicated to “SkillsUSA students, past and present, who have also learned that the chase for the gold is also a chase for your dreams.”

In the past five years, he and his students raised over $40,000 for local organizations including My Brother’s Table and the Lynn Shelter Association. To remember 9/11 and thank first responders, students delivered gift bags to every fire department, police station, ambulance base and emergency room nurse in the city. Other service projects were organized and carried out to support other community needs while practicing skills.

**Regional Advisors Of the Year**

Rita Yeary, Region 2 (Virginia)
The cosmetology instructor has been advisor at Southampton High School in Franklin, Va., since 2006.

David Urlaub, Region 3 (Michigan)
He’s mentored 7,500 students at Bay-Arenac Independent School District Career Center in Bay City.

Jeanne McClish, Region 4 (Oklahoma)
“Seeing students’ lives change is motivating,”

Rebecca Dickerson, Region 4 (Missouri)
A registered nurse, she’s taught health occupations at Eldon (Mo.) Career Center for over 10 years.

Norman Champagne, Region 5 (Arizona)
This instructional leader instills the SkillsUSA Framework at Yuma’s Kofa High.
DCA is comprised of nearly 240 companies including local, regional and national contractors and the equipment manufacturers, distributors and other companies that support them in the safe installation of natural gas pipelines and other underground utilities

DCA is proud to partner with SkillsUSA

Explore opportunities with DCA companies at www.dcaweb.org
HELP US BUILD
FOR THE FUTURE,
BRICK BY BRICK.

Purchase your own custom-engraved paver for the walkway of SkillsUSA's National Leadership Center and learn more about this campaign at:

www.skillsusa.org/store/pavers

SkillsUSA's National Leadership Center is located in Leesburg, Va., approximately 50 miles northwest of our nation's capital, Washington, D.C. The building welcomes influential visitors such as industry executives, manufacturers and VIPs from education and government.

For additional sponsorship opportunities, please contact Helen Carafa at 703-737-0657 hcarafa@skillsusa.org
For Justin Jackson and Marquis Thomas, getting into robotics led to a lot more than a gold medal in their state SkillsUSA competition. It gave them a whole new outlook on education.

“Just as long as I was passing the class, that’s all that mattered to me” until mentor and robotics coach Robert Lorenzo “changed my mindset,” says Thomas (right). “He always told me I have so much potential. My mom and the rest of my family told me the exact same thing, but I didn’t believe them. It took someone that only knew me for a couple years.”

Jackson (left) agrees. “It shook up my whole perspective of high school. It gave me a lot of opportunities to express myself in different ways, using the robot.”

After two years in the program at Essex County Schools of Technology in West Caldwell, N.J., they’ve seen their GPAs jump a full point. Now both seniors aspire to go to college for engineering.

“Growing up in Newark, the stereotype that’s pushed onto you is, music or being some type of an athlete is the only way to seriously be successful or make a name for yourself,” Thomas notes. “Mr. Lorenzo said, ‘Yes, that’s a way to go, but look at this huge amount of money that you’re just leaving behind [as an engineer].’”

Jackson and Thomas were the first in their state to compete in Robotics: Urban Search and Rescue at the SkillsUSA Championships. “Over time, I had to learn how he operates things, what are his flaws and what’s his strength,” Jackson says, adding teamwork skills to what they’ve learned individually in class.

By E. Thomas Hall
S
killsUSA’s theme this year is “SkillsUSA: Champions at Work, I’m Ready.” It’s a theme that could easily elicit the response, “Ready for what?”

As a class, come up with answers to that question. What are some areas in life, both personally and professionally, that SkillsUSA is helping you get “ready” for? How is SkillsUSA helping you get ready?

One way to show you’re ready is with the new Career Essentials Credential, part of the SkillsUSA Career Essentials program. Everyone who earns the credential maintains a career-readiness portfolio that demonstrates transferrable career readiness skills and the ability to successfully contribute to the workplace. In short, it makes you “kind of a big deal.”

During SkillsUSA’s recent national conference, the first credentials were awarded at a special event (see photo at right). Learn more at: careeressentials.org.

Opportunity doesn’t make appointments. You have to be ready when it arrives.

— Tim Fargo

No, the picture on the left isn’t abstract art. It’s actually a distorted part of another photo in this issue. Find the original photo and tell us the story or page where it appears to win a SkillsUSA special “sackpack” (first prize) or travel mug (second prize). To enter, email your answer, name, address and phone number to anyinfo@skillsusa.org (include “Photo Contest” in the subject line). Or, send to SkillsUSA Photo Contest, 14001 SkillsUSA Way, Leesburg, VA 20176. One first- and one second-prize winner will be drawn at random from the correct entries. Entries must be received by Nov. 15. Congratulations to last issue’s winners: Robert Chambers of Henderson, Tenn., and Varun Punnam of Bridgewater, N.J.
HELPING HANDS, HELPING HEARTS GO TOGETHER

Without having to worry about food, students at Texas State Technical College can move one step closer to achieving their education and career goals. SkillsUSA Community Service national medalists Isela Rodriguez, Iris Juarez and Alexandra Lugo (below) decided to incorporate their skills to create an on-campus food pantry.

Students partnered with faculty and staff, as well as local charities in Harlingen, to provide supplies and funding to make this project come to life. This silver-medal-winning idea was a sustainable solution to student hunger.

Celebrating a positive perspective

Catawba Valley Community College students decided to embrace the diversity in their community by hosting a “Celebration of Nations.” The SkillsUSA members in Hickory, N.C., involved local vendors to promote their businesses, ideals and goals during the event. The celebration showcased cultural diversity, strength and equality by hosting traditional dances, entertainment and food for the public.

To restore a forgotten history, students use one skill at a time

Gloucester Institute of Technology students restored the local African American Veterans Cemetery in Franklinville, N.J. The SkillsUSA members were joined by Lowe’s Home Improvement to donate supplies such as plants and paint. Students put their various skills together to create new fencing, build benches, add new landscaping and mow the land, creating a bright new space that recognizes and honors the fallen soldiers. Due to the rich history of the cemetery, students created information brochures to display in newly installed boxes for visitors.

To celebrate the project, local veterans did a presentation of the flag, a 21-gun salute and Civil War reenactments. The cemetery was later dedicated to the three Civil War veterans buried there.
SkillsUSA Champions features our members’ photography. We’re looking for images of SkillsUSA chapters in action, or ones that show individual members’ concentration or perseverance. For details, email thall@skillsusa.org (put “Image Photo” in the subject header) or write SkillsUSA Champions, 14001 SkillsUSA Way, Leesburg, VA 20176. The photographer’s chapter is awarded $150.

**Why does 3M partner with SkillsUSA?**

**I always turn that around and say, “Who better is there for 3M to partner with than SkillsUSA?”**

Maureen Tholen of 3M, WorldSkills USA lead sponsor

---

Envision a world where hiring managers get a list of applicants and each one has documented personal, technical and workplace readiness skills. *SkillsUSA Career Essentials* gives us that tool.

If we do our jobs, that vision becomes a reality.

---

Trey Michael of the N.C. Department of Public Instruction at the launch of the SkillsUSA Career Essentials Credential
A pipeline of possibilities await.

The National Association of Sewer Service Companies, better known as NASSCO, is a proud national sponsor of SkillsUSA.

NASSCO’s mission is to set standards for the assessment, maintenance and rehabilitation of underground infrastructure and to assure the continued acceptance and growth of trenchless technologies. Or, in simpler terms, to make sure our sewer systems are operating at full capacity and to build awareness of the sophisticated technologies available to identify and fix potential sewer failures before they happen.

To learn more about careers in sewer service technologies visit nassco.org.
EMPOWERING STUDENTS TO DEFINE, IMPLEMENT AND MEASURE THEIR CAREER-READINESS SKILLS

The SkillsUSA Career Essentials suite engages students in career-readiness skills along every point in their educational journey, whether it be middle-school, high-school or college/postsecondary. The curriculum generates high levels of student engagement and is built on evidence-based outcomes that support the industry-validated Career-Ready Assessment. Together, curricula and assessments work to culminate in students earning the industry-recognized Career Essentials credentials.

For full details on the SkillsUSA Career Essentials suite of products including purchasing information, please visit: www.careeressentials.org