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MTI Wins Most SkillsUSA Medals: Seven Years Running!

For the seventh straight year, Manatee Technical Institute (MTI) students won more medals than any other school in the nation at the 46th Annual SkillsUSA National Championships in Kansas City. Of the 942 medal awarded, Florida students took home 109 of them. MTI students alone won 61, with 25 gold, 23 silver and 13 bronze medals. Southeast High School's TV Production students took home 4 gold medal national wins.

"Everyone's a winner!" exclaimed MTI director Mary Cantrell, PhD. "They didn't get there unless they were already a winner. [They had to place first in the state to qualify.] Only two percent of SkillsUSA members make it to nationals."

The SkillsUSA Championships are a showcase for the best career and technical education students in the nation. Students work against the clock and each other, proving their expertise in occupations like air conditioning, entrepreneurship, criminal justice, and web design. According to students who compete, the SkillsUSA Championships are like the Olympics for career and technical education.

One of the five new contests this year was welding art sculpture, and MTI student Wesley Johnson took the bronze. Event spokeswoman Deborah Reynolds said new competitions, such as mobile robot technology, T-shirt design, and digital game development, help the competition adapt to the changing environment in the workplace.

About 40 MTI students volunteered for the SkillsUSA community service event hosted by Timberland PRO on the last day of the conference. Community service is highly valued by SkillsUSA. This year, students worked on several projects including building a bicycle trail, constructing a bridge, putting up siding, and creating a new community garden.

The SkillsUSA Championships began in 1967 and has grown to over 5,600 students competing in 96 different skill, technical and leadership fields. Nearly 1,500 judges and contest organizers from labor and management make the national contests possible. Contest competencies are set by industry. The theme for this year's contests was "Champions at Work, Connecting the Opportunities."

This year, seven of MTI's faculty and staff served on the National Education Team, and Cantrell served on the National Technical Team.

One of the highlights of this year's Championships was a \$10,000,000 donation by Lowe's.

SkillsUSA is a partnership of students, teachers and industry representatives working together to ensure America has a skilled workforce. The philosophy of the Championships is to reward students for excellence, to involve industry in directly evaluating student performance and to keep training relevant to employers' needs.

JOBS



46th Annual SkillsUSA Opening Ceremony in Kemper Arena, Kansas City, Missouri



Bird's eye view of several SkillsUSA competitions in action at Bartle Hall, Kansas City



Up close—MTI student Joshua Sosa competing in Automotive Technology



Occupational Health & Safety GOLD—MTI students Arika McCormack, Sonia Molina, Christopher Ryan, and Jose Rodriguez won first in the nation in the college/postsecondary category of the Occupational Health and Safety – Single competition.



Entrepreneurship SILVER—MTI students Ricardo Fontanez, Cedanio Bacon, Jason Hrnak, and Joshua Barber won second in the nation in the college/postsecondary category of the Entrepreneurship competition. They plan to open their web design business in Bradenton next month.

PARENT CORNER

- Discussion starter: Parents, have you considered encouraging your child to attend Manatee Technical Institute (MTI) after high school? Your student will gain a quality education at an affordable cost. The mission of Manatee Technical Institute is to meet and exceed our community's training and educational expectations. MTI is a 2007 Tampa Bay Business of the Year and has won more SkillsUSA medals than any other school in the nation for the past seven years.
- Some students attend MTI while still in high school through dual enrollment opportunities. Is your student ready to gain hands-on skills?
- "Give us a year, and we'll give you a career!" Doug Wagner, Director—Adult, Community and Technical Education, Manatee County Schools. For more information about Manatee Technical Institute, call (941) 751-7900.

FCAT reading comprehension QUESTION

★ What were some of the new competitions at this year's SkillsUSA National Championships?

Answer: welding art sculpture, mobile robot technology, T-shirt design, and digital game development.

What's on the WEB?

www.ManateeTechnicalInstitute.org
www.SkillsUSA.org
www.ManateeACT.com

EdVantage Strategic Objective #2: Each student will articulate personal goals, create plans to achieve those goals, and exhibit progress toward their attainment.



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Jill McGarry (941) 748-0411 ext. 7036, jmcgarry@bradenton.com
Julie Beacham-Hoole, Page Editor.