

SkillsUSA competition

Trade and technical students show their stuff

Utah students made off with plenty of honors and go on to nationals

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Colleges and universities boast student teams of their best and brightest in quiz-show format competitions such as College Bowl and Academic Challenge.

Career and technical education students have their own match-ups, too. They're bigger, louder, and require a lot more gear than question and answer cards.

Rather than crank out solutions to differential equations or brave questions about European history, these students draw up architectural plans, build cabinets, cook meals and even investigate mock crime scenes as part of the State of Utah SkillsUSA competition, held recently in Salt Lake City.

First-place winners in more than 50 skills competition categories will represent Utah in June, when they travel to Kansas City for the competition's national finals.

Hundreds of career and technical education students from 14 Utah universities, community and technical colleges and trade schools competed at the state level for a shot at competition at the national level.

Salt Lake Community College took home the lion's share of awards with 30 first-place awards in categories including graphic communications, carpentry, computer maintenance technology and medical assisting. Utah Valley State College garnered 20 first-place awards in architectural drafting, culinary arts, robotics and automation technology and automotive service technology. Ogden-Weber Applied Technology College won six first-place gold awards, with College of Eastern Utah bringing home three first-place finishes. Snow College in Richfield, Southern Utah University and Dixie State College each won two first-place awards.

"There is no question that in order for a student to make it back to finals, they need some raw talent and determination," said UVSC's SkillsUSA director and professor of engineering graphics and design technology Darin Taylor in an announcement. "But, it takes a well-trained and dedicated faculty member to hone these existing and newly acquired skills providing the student with an opportunity to rise above the rest."

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