

Cut above the rest

Comp students continue to score at Skills Canada competition

Posted 11 days ago

By Hayley Brigg

The Comp continued to show its vocational superiority as Selkirk students picked up medals at the provincial skills competition on April 9.

Five medals - one gold, two silver and two bronze - were earned at the 12th Annual Skills Canada Manitoba Competition held at Red River College.

Students Dillon Nunes (precision machine), Mike Kehler (small powered equipment) and Daniel Webber (job skills demonstration) solidified their status as the cream of the crop by placing in the top three of each of their respective divisions. Nunes and Kehler brought home bronze medals while Webber nabbed a silver.

Webber credits the competition with increasing his overall confidence and improving his communication and public speaking skills.

"I was really nervous about it at first," admitted Webber, who had to show judges how to disassemble and put a break drum back together while explaining the process. "But I'm really happy with how I did and I'm looking forward to being able to go back next year."

Grade 10 Hairstyling student Ashley Andrusko-Cox, who earned a silver in her beginner category for her bridal up-do, said the competition served as good preparation if she chooses to continue with hairstyling after graduation.

"It really showed me how much work there is, and gave me a confidence boost because I was really very nervous," said Andrusko-Cox. "I got a chance to see what it would be like working with clients in the real world."

The school's other hairstyling entry, Jill Hadfield, repeated her 2008 performance by winning gold in her category.

Hadfield had the opportunity to compete for Team Manitoba at the Skills Canada Competition last May in Calgary, winning a silver medal.

The Grade 12 student says she is hoping to improve on her performance last year when she competes once again for Team Manitoba May 20-23 in Charlottetown, P.E.I.

"Last year I was really overwhelmed and nervous, and wasn't aware of how much more detailed and long the competition was going to be," said Hadfield of 2008. "I feel I'm more prepared now and I know what to expect so hopefully that will help me."

Hairstyling teacher Darlene Cockerill, who instructs Hadfield, says she believes that Hadfield has what it takes to be successful.

“Jill’s willingness to learn and practice paired with her natural gift and talent for hairstyling will allow her to be extremely successful not only in the upcoming competition but in her career,” said Cockerill. “I’m extremely proud of her.”

A non-for-profit organization that works with employers educators, labour groups and governments, Skills Canada helps promote skilled trades and technology careers among Canadian youth.

Their unique position among private and public sector partners enables the organization to work toward securing Canada’s future skilled labour needs while helping youth to discover rewarding careers.

The Comp became involved with Skills Canada in 1996, and was an integral part in the formation of Skills Canada Manitoba.

Comp Automotive Technology teacher and Skills Canada Manitoba secretary Gary Elbers says the purpose of the competition is not only to test what students have been learning, but to better prepare them for life after highschool.

“It helps them develop skills that are marketable, and through this competition they are able to experience the pressure and requirements these trades demand,” said Elbers. “It helps them prepare for the transition from school to work.”

Cockerill explains that though preparing a student for the skills competition is a lot of work, she is always willing to help students who put forth the effort.

“This competition takes hours of time and effort, but as a teacher I am always happy to help students who want to work hard,” said Cockerill. “The competition is well worth it and a students participations in it could be a huge asset to them later on in their careers.”