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MSCC Students Earn 27 Medals at SkillsUSA State Championship

Twenty-seven Mid-South Community College students teamed up to win 10 gold, 6 silver, and 11 bronze medals at the Arkansas SkillsUSA State Leadership and Skills Championship at Hot Springs on April 18-20.

“We are very excited and proud of our students for performing so well at the state competition,” said Donnylle P. Hampton, Program Coordinator of the MSCC Technical Center. “We held a SkillsUSA internal competition this year to determine which students would represent us in Hot Springs, and I believe that had a positive impact on the outcome.”

MSCC has now won more than 20 medals for three consecutive years after totaling 26 in its first two years of competition.

Mid-South gold medal winners in the high school (secondary) competition included Devan Fowler, Marion High School,



Diesel Equipment Technology, instructors Robert Kean and Larry Smith; Derrick Voigt, Marion High School, Internetworking, instructor Jason Carr; Sualen Davis-Bowman, Earle High School, and Charcel Warren, Marion High School, Web Design, instructor Chris Davis; and Jessica Dove, West Memphis High School, Medical Terminology, instructor Tawanna Hill-Hightower.



College (postsecondary) gold medalists included Devin Lovell, Marion, Internetworking, instructor Carr; Preston Peer, Proctor, Medical Math, instructor Ann Oberg; Robert Staggs, Marion, Computer Maintenance Technology, instructor Ray Duch; and Taylor Bratton and Cody Mainhart, both of Marion, Web Design, instructor Davis.

MSCC/high school students who earned silver medals included Tameshia Morrise, West Memphis High School, Basic Healthcare Skills, instructor Patrick Alston; Cameron Peden, Marion High School, Diesel Equipment Technology, instructors Kean and Smith; and Haley Smith, Marion High School, and Phillip Bowman, West Memphis High School, Web Design, instructor Davis.

Silver medalists in the college division included Clarence Jay Holder, West Memphis, Computer Maintenance Technology, instructor Duch, and Latasha Richman, West Memphis, Medical Math, instructor Oberg.

Mid-South bronze medalists in the high school division included Luich Lucio, Marion High School, Extemporaneous Speaking, instructor Carr; Steven Dang and Jonathan Branch, West Memphis High School, Robotics & Automation, instructor Roy Germain; Toria Neal, Chaunice Jones, Claudia Meneses, and Shenetra White, all of West Memphis High School, Health Knowledge Bowl, instructor Alston.

Postsecondary bronze winners included Kimberly Jones, Edmondson, Medical Math, instructor Oberg; Gregory Jackson, Marion, CNC Milling Technology, instructor Willis Yates; and Jonathan Pellegrin and Orlene Bowers, both of Marion, Web Design, instructor Davis.

MSCC instructors expressed pride in their students' efforts to represent the college and their communities in Hot Springs.

"Everybody trained hard on the skills they would need to win, and Devan Fowler and Cameron Peden brought great credit to MSCC



through their dedication and competitive spirit," said Robert Kean, Diesel Maintenance Technology instructor. "Both of them were anxious about going to state because they were first- year students and had no previous truck repair experience."

"My students worked hard as a team, I am very excited and proud that they brought home gold this year," said Chris Davis, Web Design instructor. "Sualen and Charcel have excelled at Web design both in class and out, and Haley and Phillip are also great students who work hard to achieve great results."

In the post-secondary competition, "Cody, Taylor, Orlene, and Jonathan all did a great job. They began the program as high school students, and they are continuing to excel."

Computer networking instructor Jason Carr noted that Devin Lovell, who is currently working as a Tech Specialist for the West Memphis School District, reached the top this year after earning bronze and silver awards in 2009 and 2010, respectively. "He really earned it," Carr said.

The networking instructor said Voigt's gold medal came as a pleasant surprise.

"When he came to MSCC, he did not know that he wanted to do; he simply knew he was interested in computers," Carr said. "He started as an above average student, but once he set his sights on SkillsUSA, he became one of the better students in class."

Ann Oberg, MSCC Pharmacy Technician Specialist/Faculty, praised her students for participating – and winning.

“I am so proud of them. They all had to study the harder calculations before we actually learned them in our pharmaceutical mathematics course. In addition to being full-time students, they all balance other duties as parents and caretakers in their families. To be able to manage to do so well was quite a feat for the short amount of time we had to prepare this semester.”

Ray Duch, Computer Maintenance Technology instructor, said all of his students invested a significant amount of time and effort in preparation for the state competition.

“I am proud of all my students who competed in the Computer Maintenance and Repair competition,” he said. “They worked very hard in and out of class to get ready. Mr. Staggs and Mr. Holder worked especially hard and even spent a good deal of time helping prepare their high school teammates. Everyone did a great job representing Mid-South Community College.”

Allied Health instructor Tawanna Hill-Hightower said gold medalist Jessica Dove benefitted greatly from the experience.

“Jessica started off as a typical high school student trying to find her way at MSCC, but she has really blossomed this semester,” Hill-Hightower said. “I’m proud of her for winning the gold medal.”

First-place finishers will have the opportunity to attend the 47th annual National Leadership and Skills Conference in Kansas City June 19-24. More than 15,000 people—including students, teachers and business partners—are expected to participate in the week-long event.

For more information on high-tech learning opportunities at the college, both on the high school and college level, please call MSCC’s Workforce Technology Center at (870) 733-6853. For general information about MSCC, please call (870) 733-6728 or visit the college’s website at www.midsouthcc.edu.