



From SkillsUSA to WorldSkills, Florida

School Impact Story: Florida Atlantic University

SkillsUSA competitions help students prepare for careers in technical/skilled trades and service occupations. They also provide high-quality educational experiences for students in leadership, teamwork, citizenship and character development.



A Cisco Networking Academy student at Florida Atlantic University won the IT/PC networking competition at SkillsUSA in 2009, and will go on to compete at WorldSkills London in 2011.

SkillsUSA is a national partnership of students, teachers and industry, working together to help ensure that America has a skilled workforce. SkillsUSA chapters help students preparing for careers in technical, skilled trades, and service occupations. It also provides high-quality educational experiences for students in leadership, teamwork, citizenship and character development. It builds and

reinforces self-confidence, productive work attitudes and communications skills. It emphasizes total quality at work—high ethical standards, superior work skills, life-long education, and pride in the dignity of work. SkillsUSA also promotes understanding of the free-enterprise system and involvement in community service.

Matthew Vicari, a graduate of South Tech Education Center and a current student at Florida Atlantic University, won the IT/PC Networking section of the SkillsUSA Championships in 2009. Matt is pursuing a degree in computer science, and consults with the campus ICT support team.

As the highest scorer (he was the high school gold medalist), he was selected to represent the United States in London at the 41st annual WorldSkills International competition in 2011. Matthew will compete as a member of the U.S. World Team, which has 22 members under the age of 23.

Every two years, hundreds of young people from 53 member countries compete in the prestigious WorldSkills competition. Member countries include: Japan, Germany, Saudi Arabia, Thailand, Canada, Australia, Brazil and many others. Considered “the best of the best,” these contestants compete for four days in 45 occupa-



tional skill areas, including ICT, manufacturing, transportation, construction and services. Participants compete before the public in contests that are run and judged by industry representatives using demanding international standards. Many competitor countries invest time and money to prepare their teams for WorldSkills.

This year in London, more than 1,000 competitors will test their skills. Approximately 5000 international experts, delegates and judges will gather from around the world, and 3,000 volunteers will be recruited to assist in the event. A total of 150,000 student and public spectators will attend.

Over its 60-year history, WorldSkills International (formerly known as the "Skill Olympics") has come to symbolize the

pinnacle of excellence in professional training. It provides a unique means of exchange and comparison of world-class competency standards in the industrial trades and service sectors of the global economy. The continued growth of WorldSkills attests to the fact that traditional trade and craft skills, along with newer technology multi-skilled occupations, make an essential contribution to economic and social well being everywhere.

"I want to compete in the WorldSkills competition because I enjoy the challenge, and I want to see how I well I perform compared to other competitors in my field."

Matthew's career goal is to work for Cisco, Google or Microsoft, and some day start his own ICT business.