



Companies Contribute over \$4,000 to Successful SkillsUSA California Woodworking Contests

AWFS members, exhibitors and others provide support for aspiring cabinetmakers

Blum, Bosch, Laguna Tools, Royal Plywood and other generous companies showed their support for industry education activities by contributing over \$4,000 in tools, supplies, gifts and prizes to the 2013 [SkillsUSA California](#) Region 3 (Los Angeles) woodworking contests and the State Cabinetmaking Championships, held February 2 and April 6, respectively.

[SkillsUSA](#) is one of the largest national career & technical student organizations in the nation. It promotes job readiness with skills and leadership training and supports students entering skilled trades. SkillsUSA students compete in skill contests for their field of study to display their proficiency and earn recognition and prizes. Competition begins at the regional level and then advances to state, national and ultimately international championships.

At the 2013 SkillsUSA California Region 3 contests, six high school Cabinetmaking students from Los Angeles and Orange counties spent a Saturday morning at Los Angeles Trade and Technical College building cabinet components, while twelve Introductory Woodworking students built magazine holders. Royal Plywood donated all of the material, Rockler donated screws, biscuits and safety glasses and Blum contributed tape measures and pencils to give to the students.

In April, a total of fifteen Cabinetmaking students from seven different schools advanced from Regional events across the state to compete at the State Championships in San Diego. Competitors were challenged to build a two-foot tall cabinet utilizing Blum hinges for the face-frame door and KV drawer slides for the drawer. A Blum hinge press, Bosch routers, Kreg pocket hole jigs were also employed. Students also had to apply edge banding and moulding; they had eight hours to finish the project.

Gary Riley of Blum, Inc, Mark Fuller of San Diego Fine Woodworkers Association and former woodworking instructor Joshua Torbick served as judges using criteria such as accuracy of measurements and use of tools and machinery. The finished cabinets were then donated to San Diego Habitat for Humanity. "SkillsUSA works because it empowers students," says Saúl Martín, who served as Coordinator for the Regional and State Cabinetmaking Contests. "They see that what they are doing matters, that industry and others value their skills and that they will have a future career utilizing these skills."

The top medalists at the State Championships received a Bosch palm router combo kit and a \$200 Laguna Tools gift certificate for their school. All State competitors received a Blum "goodie bag" with a Blum Pozi screwdriver, a tape measure, a current copy of Woodworker West magazine and other useful items.

The students who earn the highest honors in the state competition – Gold Medals – are then invited to Kansas City in June for the high-energy National Leadership & Skills Championships, where they will pit their skills against students from all other states. Top-scoring national competitors will compete at the WorldSkills Cabinetmaking Qualifying Trial at the AWFS Fair, July 24-27, 2013 in Las Vegas, NV and the winner of that event will go to [WorldSkills](#) 2015 in Sao Paolo, Brazil.

AWFS recognizes the 2013 participating SkillsUSA California Cabinetmaking sponsors:

- Amerock
- Blum, Inc.
- Bosch Power Tools & Accessories
- ESI (Edgebanding Services Inc)
- Laguna Tools
- Rockler Woodworking and Hardware
- Royal Plywood
- Woodworker West Magazine
- Wurth Louis and Company

AWFS contacted the sponsors and organized the donations on behalf of SkillsUSA California. The student competitors and their advisors also received a complimentary copy of *fresh wood*, the AWFS publication that showcases the Fresh Wood student woodworking competition. "AWFS supports SkillsUSA because we want to encourage and motivate the future leaders of our industry," says AWFS Executive Director Angelo Gangone. "SkillsUSA students learn the leadership, employability and trade skills that will help them stand out from their peers."

The SkillsUSA California 2013 State Championships medalists are as follows:

High School Cabinetmaking

Gold Medal

Dan Brigantino
Salinas High School
Salinas, CA

Silver Medal

Hayden Mullin
Paso Robles High School
Paso Robles, CA

Bronze Medal

Lake Salazar
Fontana High School
Fontana, CA

Post-Secondary Cabinetmaking

Gold Medal

Andrew Flores
Mission Trails ROP
Salinas, CA

To view images from the SkillsUSA California 2013 State Cabinetmaking contest, [click here](#). (Photo credit: AWFS). For more information, contact Adria Torrez, AWFS Assistant Education Director at adria@awfs.org or (323) 215-0311.

About AWFS:

The Association of Woodworking & Furnishings Suppliers® (AWFS), founded in 1911, is a non-profit organization that wholly owns and produces the biennial AWFS®Fair. The largest trade association serving the entire home and commercial furnishings industry, AWFS has more than 400 members, including manufacturers and distributors of machinery, hardware, software, tooling, lumber, components, wood products and supplies for the woodworking industry including cabinet, furniture, millwork and custom woodworking products.