

For Immediate Release

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Woodworking Industry Rallies to Support SkillsUSA California Contests

Companies and Industry Professionals Commit Time, Tools and Supplies for Students

ANAHEIM, CA – April 26, 2018 - Blum, Castle, Inc., Crown Ace Hardware, Colonial Saw/Lamello, Hafele, ESI, Decore-ative Specialties, Drawer Box Specialties, Grex Tools, Leitz Tooling, and Royal Plywood generously donated over \$8,500 in supplies, tools, and giveaways for students at the 2018 SkillsUSA California State Cabinetmaking and Introductory Woodworking contest Championships, held Saturday, April 21 at Chaffey High School in Ontario, California. Staff and industry volunteers from the Association of Woodworking & Furnishings Suppliers® (AWFS®) assisted as contest coordinators, judges, and with overall contest support.



Fifteen students from fourteen schools across the state competed in the Introductory Woodworking contest. This contest is intended to introduce students to the SkillsUSA competitive environment and encourage them to return to compete in the Cabinetmaking contest the following year. Contestants had to interpret a set of plans to construct a wooden tool box with a drawer. They had access to the band saw, jig saw, drill press, disk sander, and hand tools to create the component parts and assemble the tool box in a six hour time span. Materials for this contest were provided by Drawer Box Specialties and Royal Plywood. The Introductory Woodworking competition was judged by Charlie Rizzo of

Ethan Allen, Jorge Garcia, a woodworking student at Palomar College, and Richard Simms, a SkillsUSA California Cabinetmaking contest Alumni. San Jacinto High School woodworking instructor Roy Castillo served as contest coordinator, Saul Martin of Architectural Woodworking Company prepared the contest materials, and Adam Kessler of AWFS developed the project plans. Prize packages for the three winning contestants were provided by Crown Ace Hardware and author Asa Christiana donated two signed copies of his book *Build Stuff with Wood*.

The 2018 SkillsUSA California State Cabinetmaking competition hosted seventeen students from eleven different high schools. Students competed for medals and the opportunity to represent California at the upcoming SkillsUSA National Championships. The students built a cabinet with a bookcase that tested their skills using various woodworking machinery. Students had access to the table saw, router table, edgebanding machine, sliding panel saw, miter saw, and hand tools. Karl Frey from Colonial Saw introduced the students to the Zeta joinery system with a contest loan of a Zeta machine and a donation of Tenso connectors for all the Cabinetmaking students. Local



Blum representative Lee Schuette assisted the students in attaching their hinges using a Blum Minipress P and helped them install Blum Movento drawer slides. Decore-ative Specialties donated solid wood doors and drawer fronts for the students which saved the students time in the contest and enhanced the overall look of the finished product. Drawer Box Specialties made pre-dovetailed drawer boxes for the students to assemble. ESI donated edge-banding, while all of the solid stock and sheet goods came from Royal Plywood of Cerritos, CA. Hafele provided leveling blocks for the projects. The knobs for the drawer and door were provided by Kemp Hardware. Leitz Tooling donated 4 new saw blades which were given to Chaffey High School following the contest.

Students had nine hours over two days to finish the project and judges used criteria such as accuracy of measurements and use of tools and machinery to determine the scores. The project plans were developed by AWFS Education Manager Adam Kessler, along with support from Cabinetmaking contest coordinator Saul Martin of Architectural Woodworking



Company (Los Angeles). The judges for the Cabinetmaking Competition were David Banales, a cabinetmaker and businessman, and Anthony Fortner, a Woodworking Instructor at Cerritos College. The contestants were allowed to take home their finished cabinets after the event. Blum provided “goodie” bags with tape measures, Pozi screwdrivers, and pencils, and Crown Ace Hardware, a San Diego area family store, donated prizes for the contest medalists. As prizes for the Cabinetmaking competition, Castle Inc. provided a Castle 100 pocket hole machine and Grex Tools provided a Grex H850 LX 21-Gauge Brad Nailer.

Erik Cruz of Fontana High School (Fontana, CA) received the highest score and the Gold medal in the state high school Cabinetmaking competition and has been invited to compete at the SkillsUSA National Leadership & Skills Championships Louisville, Kentucky, June 25-29, 2018. The Society of Wood Manufacturing, a chapter of the AWFS, raised \$500 towards Cruz’s travel expenses. He will represent California and compete against other top scoring high school competitors from other states.

Over Fifty Woodworking Students Compete in 2018 Southern California Regional Contests

Blum, Inc., Cerritos College, Royal Plywood and Grex Tools supported the SkillsUSA California Regional woodworking contests, held in January. Over fifty high school students competed in the Cabinetmaking and the Introductory Woodworking contests combined in the Southern California regional events. The Cabinetmaking contestants prepared a bill of materials and built a small wall hung cabinet with a drawer, while the Introductory Woodworking contestants built a tool tote during the three hour contest. Royal Plywood provided over \$900 in material for the two region 3 (Los Angeles area) woodworking contests. Blum, Inc. contributed drawer slides, tape measures, calipers, pencils and bags and Grex donated a 21 Gauge Brad Nailer for the winner of the Cabinetmaking contest. A team of industry professionals and student from Cerritos College volunteered their time to develop the contests and serve as contest coordinators, judges, saw monitors and assisted with other critical aspects of the contest execution.

If you would like to learn more about SkillsUSA woodworking or participate in future SkillsUSA California woodworking events, please contact Adam Kessler at adam@awfs.org or (323) 215-0312 for more information.

About SkillsUSA: 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.

To see information on the SkillsUSA California Woodworking competitions from AWFS, including photos, sponsor and volunteer information, contest plans, and results, visit this page: <http://www.awfs.org/education/skillsusa/>

For high resolution images and captioning information, contact Adam Kessler at adam@awfs.org or (323) 215-0312.