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SkillsUSA Selects Mechatronics Competitors for WorldSkills 2024
Tennessee Team to Represent the U.S. at World Event

Leesburg, Va., Dec. 8, 2023 — SkillsUSA has selected Gabriel Eady and Derek Summers of Tennessee as the official competitors for Mechatronics at the 2024 WorldSkills Competition. Their technical expert is Josh Whittington. The pair will represent the United States at the 2024 WorldSkills Competition. The prestigious international event will be held Sept. 10-15, 2024 in Lyon, France.

“The 2024 WorldSkills USA team will have an amazing opportunity to represent SkillsUSA and our nation while undergoing incredibly rigorous training in their craft,” said SkillsUSA Executive Director Chelle Travis. “These team members are making a serious commitment to both their skill development and personal growth that will foster their drive, passion and life’s purpose.”

Eady and Summers both attended Roane State Community College in Harriman, Tenn., and were the state and the national gold medalist team in the SkillsUSA Championships in 2023. The pair are employed as DENSO technicians at the leading automotive supplier’s Maryville, Tenn., manufacturing facility.

Eady explains that participating in a global competition is a once in a lifetime experience. “The opportunity to represent the U.S. and the next generation of skilled individuals that it is producing is very exciting and a great privilege. There are so many things I look forward to at the competition, but something I’m most excited about is getting to see how the skills I’ve acquired measure up against the best from across the globe.” At DENSO, Eady is responsible for creating, installing, maintaining, troubleshooting and repairing electrical systems.

Summers credits his employer for much of his success to date. “I would consider all of my time in the five years I’ve been with DENSO as a technician to have contributed to this achievement, whether it was skills I picked up on the job or during my schooling while employed here.” Summers most looks forward to “getting to experience different cultures in an exciting and

competitive environment.” At DENSO, Summers is responsible for programming and teaching robots, troubleshooting and vision integration.

Their expert is Josh Whittington of Valdosta, Ga., who is the executive director of Wiregrass Technical College. Whittington has an extensive background that will be an asset to the team as they train, as a professor of mechatronics and workforce development expert with a passion for education training solutions, industrial systems and automation education. He has served as the WorldSkills USA Mechatronics technical expert since 2018 and he was a WorldSkills USA Mechatronics competitor himself in Abu Dhabi in 2017, competing with teammate Corey Cleghorn.

The WorldSkills USA team will compete in several trade areas in the largest international showcase of skilled trades including mechatronics, car painting and automotive technology. SkillsUSA will announce the official team sponsors and other team members and their experts in the coming months.

The 47th WorldSkills Competition in 2024 will welcome 1,500 competitors from over 65 countries and regions to take part in 62 skill competitions at Eurexpo Lyon. The competition will showcase dozens of trade skills from construction and building technology, creative arts and fashion, information and communication technology, manufacturing and engineering, social and personal services, and transportation and logistics. Over 250,000 spectators from around the world are expected attend the 2024 competition including students, public policymakers, employers, teachers, trainers, technical experts and government officials.

A student-led partnership of education and industry, SkillsUSA is America’s proud champion of the skilled trades, building the nation’s future skilled workforce by delivering graduates who are career ready, day one. SkillsUSA works year-round to instill positive attitudes, build self-esteem and empower students to excel in the career path of their choice and follow their passions. The organization has 850 national partners and is integral to the training in nearly 20,000 career and technical education classrooms.

Follow Eady, Summers and the rest of the 2024 WorldSkills USA team at:

www.worldskillsusa.org.

About SkillsUSA

SkillsUSA is America’s proud champion of the skilled trades. It’s a student-led partnership of education and industry that’s building the skilled workforce our nation depends on with graduates who are career ready, day one. Representing nearly 380,000 career and technical education students and teachers, SkillsUSA chapters thrive in middle schools, high schools and college/postsecondary institutions nationwide. SkillsUSA’s mission empowers students to become skilled professionals, career-ready leaders and responsible community members. That mission is accomplished through the SkillsUSA Framework of Personal Skills, Workplace Skills and Technical Skills Grounded in Academics, which is integrated into the classroom curriculum. Through Framework instruction, students develop the character-shaping leadership skills — teamwork, communication, professionalism and more — that successful careers and lives

demand. At the same time, students hone their high-level technical skills against current industry standards in more than 130 skilled trade areas, from 3-D Animation to Welding. The result? Focused, confident and highly skilled graduates who are ready to work, ready to lead and ready to make a difference in our schools, workplaces and communities. A vital solution to the skills gap, where more in-demand skilled trades positions are available than qualified professionals to fill them, SkillsUSA has served over 14 million difference-making members since 1965. To learn more, visit www.skillsusa.org.

About WorldSkills

Since 1950, WorldSkills has come to symbolize the pinnacle of excellence in vocational 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's multi-skilled occupations, make an essential contribution to the economic and social well-being of people everywhere. For more information, go to: www.worldskills.org.

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