

**Masonry  
Technical  
Committee**

**For Immediate Release**

**For Additional Information  
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## **Welcome Back to Louisville SkillsUSA**

Louisville, KY. – Companies and organizations of the masonry industry joined together to support the 51<sup>st</sup> annual SkillsUSA National Leadership and Skills Conference and the National Masonry Contest on June 25, 2015. After being held in Kansas City, Missouri for decades, the SkillsUSA Conference has returned to the Bluegrass state where it will be held for the next several years.

The 43 young masons from 32 states were allotted a maximum of six hours to construct a project composed of brick and block, set on a concrete block base. Each contestant received a detailed drawing to which they were expected to adhere to closely.

The 2015 winner of the secondary/high school division of the competition was Luke Dutton from West Rowan High School in Mount Ulla, North Carolina. The winner of the post-secondary/college division was Alex Ossowski from Central Cabarrus High School in Concord, North Carolina. Congrats to North Carolina.

The masonry programs or schools of each first-place winner received a \$1,500 scholarship from Spec Mix. All six medal winners (three in each division) were awarded tools from Bon Tool and the Marshalltown Company, I-Pads, construction calculators, Lowes & Carhartt vouchers, as well as various other items donated by loyal supporters and sponsors of this event.

Masonry competitors were part of the well over 6,100 students who competed in over 100 different trade, technical, and leadership fields. The contestants demonstrated their level of training and skill in everything from prepared speech, to cooking and nail care, to carpentry, welding, and masonry.

To qualify for the Nationals, the students had been winners of their own state run contests. Ten percent of the scoring in the masonry contest was a written test covering a variety of subjects such as tools, construction math, safety procedures, etc. The remainder of the scoring covered skills involved in the actual laying of the project such as plumb, level, square, full joints, and tooling & neatness. Many of the students' projects tested at a very high level.

Thanks to sustaining members of the National SkillsUSA Masonry Technical Committee for their monetary support, and obvious concern for mason training. The members are: Bryan Light, Manager Brick Industry Association SE – Bill Kjorlien, Manager Argos USA – John Bongiovanni Sales Coordinator, Bon Tool Company – Ray Leonhard, President/CEO & CFO Brick Industry Association – Kim Haley, Marketing Marshalltown Company – Jeff Buczkiewicz, President/CEO Mason Contractors Association of America – Bob Melton, Executive Director Masonry Institute of

Tennessee – Rolly Cox, Manager Multiquip Corporation – Jason Thompson, VP Engineering National Concrete Masonry Association – Dan Belcher, Director National Center for Construction Education & Research – Peter Kiley, Executive Vice President Oldcastle Architectural – Brian Carney, Vice President & Nick Blohowiak Manager Spec Mix, Inc.

In addition, the actual workings of the masonry contest from floor layout to clean-up would not be successful without the five members of the SkillsUSA Education Team; Don Clark, Al Herndon, Todd Larson, Richard McKnight, and Rich Nagy. Thanks to River City Masonry and Mason Structure as well for their help in this regard. Judges were supplied by Jeff Garnett through BAC locals in nearby Ohio & Indiana, supplemented by local masons and several skilled masonry instructors from around the country from as far away as Texas and Wisconsin.

Brick donations in excess of 18,000 units were donated by General Shale, L. Thorne Company, Brampton Brick, and Brickcraft.

Mortar donations and ‘Mudslingers’ were again supplied by Spec Mix and the Quikcrete Company. Multiquip donated the use of the mortar mixing, and mortar delivery equipment.

Other highlights of the week included a field trip to a local block plant, A. C. Krebs Company, that was attended by close to 100 students, instructors, and parents. The owner of the facility, Mr. Cecil Deboe, is a third generation mason himself, and has been a very active supporter of mason training in Louisville for many decades. He happily donated the block for the contest as well. The tour was followed by a luncheon for the students/instructors that was hosted by Dan Belcher and NCCER. Dan gave a spirited presentation to the audience concerning the future of the construction industry.

The SkillsUSA Championship is the largest single day of corporate volunteerism in America valued at more than \$36 million in industry support of donated time, equipment, cash and material. All contests are run by and judged by industry standards for employment. More than 1,000 judges participated this year.

#### PHOTO CAPTIONS

Photo #1 – **And the winners are . . .** (back row L to R) Silver Medal Post-secondary/College Cody Palmer, The Williamson Free School of Mechanical Trades in Media, PA – Silver Medal Secondary Tyler Hack, Anthis Career Center in Fort Wayne, IN – Gold Medal Secondary Luke Dutton, West Rowan High School in Mount Ulla, NC . . . (front row L to R) Bronze Medal Post-secondary/College Jose Hernandez, Arizona Mason Contractors Association in Phoenix, AZ – Gold Medal Post-secondary/College Alex Ossowski, Central Cabarrus High School in Concord, NC – Bronze Medal Secondary Eric Kurtz, Penta Career Center in Perrysburg, OH.

Flanking the winners are SkillsUSA Masonry Technical Committee Members (extreme left) Bill Kjorlien, Masonry Technical Services Manager Argos USA; and (extreme right) Bryan Light, Technical Services Manager Brick Industry Association SE-Region and Chair of the Masonry Technical Committee.

Photo #2

**1<sup>st</sup> Place Winners . . .** (L to R) Gold Medal Secondary Luke Dutton, West Rowan High School in Mount Ulla, NC – Gold Medal Post-secondary/College Alex Ossowski, Central Cabarrus High School

in Concord, NC. proudly displaying checks that will be given to their schools to support future scholarships.

Photo #3

**2<sup>nd</sup> Place Winners** . . . (L to R) Silver Medal Secondary Tyler Hack, Anthis career Center in Fort Wayne, IN –Silver Medal Post-secondary/College Cody Palmer, The Williamson Free School of Mechanical Trades in Media, PA.

Photo #4

**3<sup>rd</sup> Place Winners** . . . (L to R) Bronze Medal Secondary Eric Kurtz, Penta Career Center in Perrysburg, OH – Bronze Medal Post-secondary/College Jose Hernandez, Arizona Mason Contractors Association in Phoenix, AZ.

Photo #5

**Display of Prizes** . . . Donated prizes from SkillsUSA Masonry Technical Committee member companies, and other supporters of technical training.