

## Northern Student Medals at Provincial and National Skills Competitions

Imagine that you are given a scope document that outlines the strict guidelines of a project. The project requires intense focus, an aptitude for the skills you are demonstrating and the ability to time manage in order to complete the project within proscribed timelines. Now imagine you have to do this while under the watchful eyes of judges and surrounded by fellow competitors, a gallery of friends, family and strangers.

This is what Eric LeSann faced when competing in the Automotive Technology category at the provincial skills competition in Winnipeg in April, 2019, and then on a grander scale at the national skills competition in Halifax in May, 2019. Clearly Eric was up for the challenge, beating out 11 other competitors and winning gold in the Automotive Technology category at the Manitoba Skills Competition at Red River College.

“Eric has done a remarkable job representing himself and his community and we should all be very proud of his accomplishments this year. Eric is a very bright, respectful young man with an exciting future ahead of him”, said Riley Wlasichuk, Automotive Technician Instructor, University College of the North (UCN). Riley was instrumental in helping Eric prepare for the provincial and national competitions.



Eric LeSann wins gold at the Provincial Skills Event!

At the provincial event, competitors in the Automotive Technology challenge had to demonstrate their knowledge in powertrain mechanical, electrical accessories, braking systems, suspension, steering and chassis systems.

Having won gold at the provincial level, Eric went on to compete at the national skills event in Halifax. During the 12 hour competition, competitors were tested in service information retrieval, engine mechanical, engine management, ignition systems, vehicle emission systems, electrical accessories, electrical, braking systems, suspension and steering and power trains. Eric competed alongside finalists from each province, all of whom were vying for the top spot and the honour of representing Canada at the World Skills Competition in Russia.

Eric earned a silver medal and while he will not be competing at the world event, his accomplishments are remarkable.

“We are so very proud of Eric”, said Kathi McConnell-Hore, Principal, Margaret Barbour Collegiate Institute (MBCI), “We all knew how incredibly talented he was and am so

pleased that he was able to demonstrate his knowledge and proficiency amongst peers and others”.

Eric is currently enrolled in a joint program between MBCI and UCN where students attend vocational programs at UCN while achieving high school credits and work towards their apprenticeship levels.

Of the experience, Eric said, “On the first day of the competition it was very professional, the rules were strict and the competitors were ready. The first day consisted of working on brakes, engines, and transmissions. For the second day, we did drivability concerns, electrical, and suspension. On Thursday it was time for the awards ceremony. I was called to the stage along with the gold medalist, I was in shock when I heard my name, I had forgotten what to do when you get a medal. So I ran onto the stage, shook the presenters hand and was on my way with my medal”.

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