



NEWS RELEASE

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San Elizario HS SkillsUSA students bring home gold

Jose Olivas, advertising and graphic design teacher at San Elizario High School, knows what it takes in order for his Skills USA students to become national champions. On June 25, Olivas had a strong inkling that he just might have coached another group of winners as he proudly watched Betsabe Barrientos, Perla De La Torre, and Lucia Noe compete at the SkillsUSA 46th Annual National Leadership and Skills Conference (NLSC). Betsabe, Perla, and Lucia went on to capture the highest rating possible at the nationwide event earning a gold medal in the Tech Prep Showcase – Arts and Communication category.

For over eight years Olivas has been encouraging students to develop leadership and technical abilities as an advisor for the SkillsUSA chapter on campus. This is the second year that he has had students named as national gold medalists in the Tech Prep Showcase where they compete against teams from across the United States. In total over 5,000 students participated in 96 contests at the SkillsUSA national championships held in Kansas City, Missouri from June 21-25. All contests were judged by business professionals using industry standards to rate participants.

Perla, a recent graduate of San Elizario High School, and Betsabe and Lucia who are both incoming seniors have been competing with their Tech Prep Showcase presentation since February but began all the preparation for their project back in August 2009. Under the guidance of Olivas and teaching assistant Sylvia Ruvalcaba, these three young ladies developed their display around the 2nd Annual San Elizario ISD Health Fair held in September 2009. Their showcase consisted of planning, producing, and presenting all the promotional materials used to make the health fair a successful community event.

Over time, Olivas has seen the confidence level of the SkillsUSA students at San Elizario High School grow as they gained valuable experience competing and excelling in local and state contests. He believed that Perla, Betsabe, and Lucia had the talent and drive to become gold medal winners at Skills USA nationals. Olivas had seen the girls practice over and over again long after classes had ended and most students had gone off to enjoy their summer vacation.

“The preparation and ability was there it was just a matter of creating that interest in their presentation,” Olivas said.

The three students rehearsed long hours and refined their display items as much as they could all in an effort to improve their presentation before traveling to Kansas City. Finally all of their hard work paid off and came to an exciting conclusion as the San Elizario High School students were announced as national gold medalists over the sound system at Kemper Arena on June 25.

“Perla, Betsie and Lucy did it! It was all worth the sacrifice and preparation to be named number one in the nation at the SkillsUSA NLSC 2010,” Olivas added.

After enjoying their national victory and their remaining summer time off, up next for the San Elizario High School SkillsUSA chapter will be gearing up once again for the district’s health fair in the fall. The mission of SkillsUSA is to bring together career and technical education students, teachers, and industry to enhance the

leadership and workforce skills of its student members. The SkillsUSA chapter at San Elizario High School includes students from construction careers, automotive technology, CISCO information technology, cosmetology, and advertising and graphic design. Before advancing to nationals, Betsabe Barrientos, Perla De La Torre, and Lucia Noe were among the 33 students from San Elizario High School that qualified for the SkillsUSA state competition held in Corpus Christi in March.

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