



Aaron Taves stays cool under pressure at the 2017 World Skills Competition in Abu Dhabi. He won a Medallion of Excellence for earning in excess of 700 points.

Skilled trades celebrated in Abu Dhabi

Alberta tech wins Medallion of Excellence at biennial WorldSkills competition

All those late evenings studying the Hyundai 1.6L engine at the Northern Alberta Institute of Technology really paid off for Aaron Taves.

The 20-year-old Fountain Tire technician from Camrose, Alta., put his hard-earned knowledge to work at the WorldSkills competition in October. And while he didn't medal in the auto service competition, he finished in the top third of competitors and scored enough points to earn a Medallion of Excellence.

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Over 1,300 apprentices and skilled trade workers from around the world, including 31 Canadians, gathered in Abu Dhabi, U.A.E., for the biennial competition that celebrates 51 different skilled trades like bricklaying, mechatronics, landscaping, hairdressing, cabinet making, cooking, and auto body repair.

The automotive service competitors were tested in six main areas: transmission and drivetrain, suspension and steering, engine mechanical, driveability diagnosis, body electrical, and braking systems.

Aaron first learned about SkillsCanada through his local high school and once he got a taste of competition, he couldn't stay away from it. He has now competed in no fewer than seven skills competitions – at the provincial, national, and international levels, and has won medals in



Team Canada at the opening ceremony in Abu Dhabi. The team received 13 Medallions of Excellence, and one bronze medal.



Canadian mechatronics competitors Theodor Willert and Avery Bird put the final touches on their robotic production line on Day Four of competition. Their efforts would earn them a bronze medal at WorldSkills 2017.

six of those competitions.

He's been preparing for WorldSkills 2017 since he earned a spot on Team Canada in early 2016. En route, he also participated in EuroSkills 2016 in Gothenburg, Germany and at the Canadian WorldSkills Team Trials in Edmonton earlier this year.

Held every two years, WorldSkills is the world's largest professional

education event, billed as the pinnacle of international excellence in skilled trades and technologies.

In total country points, Canada placed 13th out of the 57 countries who scored points in the competition. Taves placed 11th out of the 36 automotive technology competitors, and earned a Medallion for Excellence by scoring 716 points out of a possible 800 in his competition.

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