

SkillsUSA

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economic and community growth in the Greater Lehigh Valley.

"Your amazing industry partnerships as evidenced by the size of the selections today have long been a model for SkillsUSA programs across the nation as the right way to build meaningful relationships in a region support both education and industry needs," SkillsUSA National Executive Director Chelle Travis said during the District 11 championships, which were held Jan. 29 at the Agricultural Hall in Allentown.



SkillsUSA

Winners from the regional competition will participate in the Pennsylvania SkillsUSA Championships in April. The Lehigh Valley contest is one of the largest regional championships in the nation, according to Travis.

"You should be extremely proud of the work that you do here today," she said.

The Lehigh Valley Economic Development Corporation (LVEDC) was a sponsor for the

event and has been a long-time supporter of SkillsUSA, which aligns with LVEDC's efforts with educational institutions and employers to ensure Lehigh Valley maintains a competitive workforce and talent supply.

"LVEDC is committed to filling the talent gaps in the workforce and matching talent supply and demand," said Karianne Gelinas, LVEDC Vice President of Strategic Initiatives and Research. "An important component is the important work SkillsUSA does improving the quality of the nation's skilled workforce by teaching technical, personal, and workplace skills."

Categories in the competition included electrical construction wiring, automotive service technologies, criminal justice, culinary arts, nurse assisting, and much more.

The LVEDC Education and Talent Supply Council has been focused on creating and executing regional strategies to improve the region's talent pipeline. Among its priorities for this year are an updated talent supply study, and a survey of alumni of regional colleges and universities to understand their career-related priorities and perceptions of Lehigh Valley.

Travis said SkillsUSA graduates more than 100,000 career-ready students each year, and offers nearly 10,000 contests annually like the Lehigh Valley event, all of which lead up to the national level.

"Nationally, we often hear about the mismatch between the talent pool and the jobs that need to be filled," Travis said. "We are doing our part to improve our skills and narrow the skills gap, year by year."

The Bethlehem Area Vocational-Technical School, and the Lehigh Career & Technical Institute in North Whitehall Township each had 41 competitors win medals at the competition across nearly three dozen contest categories. BAVTS had 20 students win first place medals, while LCTI had 14.

Additionally, the Career Institute of Technology in Forks Township had 22 students win medals across 19 different categories, and six of them won first place, according to the SkillsUSA Council.

Among the categories were basic health care, automotive service technologies, crime scene investigation, criminal justice, culinary arts, fire fighting, nurse assisting, electrical construction wiring, plumbing, and much more.

"To me, SkillsUSA is a perfect display of a student's path to success," said Ayodeji Aderin, studying electronics technology at Monroe Career and Technical Institute. "I instantly fell in love with the organization, and promised myself to participate in anything and everything SkillsUSA-related."

SkillsUSA's District 11 includes students from Lehigh, Northampton, Monroe, and Upper Bucks counties. The Upper Bucks County Technical School competed in the event, along with the aforementioned schools.



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Ken Field

Owner of Slate Belt Energy Services

Exclusively in the Blue Valley Times

Looks Can be Deceiving

Architects love to make new homes look interesting. That's probably part of what makes people want to own them but every time they get farther from the basic box shape, they create problems for the trades. Heating and air conditioning systems can be a real challenge to install in such a way that they will provide even temperature to every room in the house when some rooms are nearly impossible to get ducts to. Plumbing can be difficult too because of requirements for drain pipes and vents. When the trades need to get creative to accomplish their goals, sometimes they break important rules that are in place to prevent future problems. Water pipes and ducts installed in exterior walls are a very bad way to reach a difficult room. Installing water pipes in any unconditioned space is a bad idea.

Insulating homes that have very complicated shapes is much more complicated too. Not so much the walls, but many times the floors and ceilings will not be as straightforward to airseal and insulate as a simpler home design would be. Living space over garages are possibly the hardest place to insulate correctly and rarely do I see one that has been done properly even though what exists passed the code inspection. The building code is not nearly as concerned with air leakage as it is with insulation value. Since air moves easily through fiberglass insulation it can reach the interior of a home at almost the same temperature as it is outside. Fiberglass insulation works only when air is trapped within it. If you can see the fiberglass, its insulating value is already reduced. This rule is not as important in the center of an attic where the fiberglass is installed flat and not exposed to wind, but near the eaves on every attic there is a flaw that adds a line of cold ceiling about a foot wide to the exterior perimeter of every room. Vaulted ceilings and tray ceilings are weaknesses as are cantilevered floors and any area with a knee attic. Very few homes today are built with any crawl spaces but they are almost always insulated incorrectly.

Don't think that because your home is only 10 or 15 years old that it is state of the art. If you notice cold spots in the winter, you are noticing the flaws that easily pass the code inspection and are costing you money and comfort. Some are repairable and some may not be cost effective to address but it's always worth having them checked by a professional.

Ken Field is the owner of Field's Service, Inc. and Slate Belt Energy Services. He has over 40 years of experience in heating, air conditioning and is certificated by RESNET and BPI in various areas of energy conservation. He can be reached at 610-599-8832 or at www.SlateBeltEnergy.com

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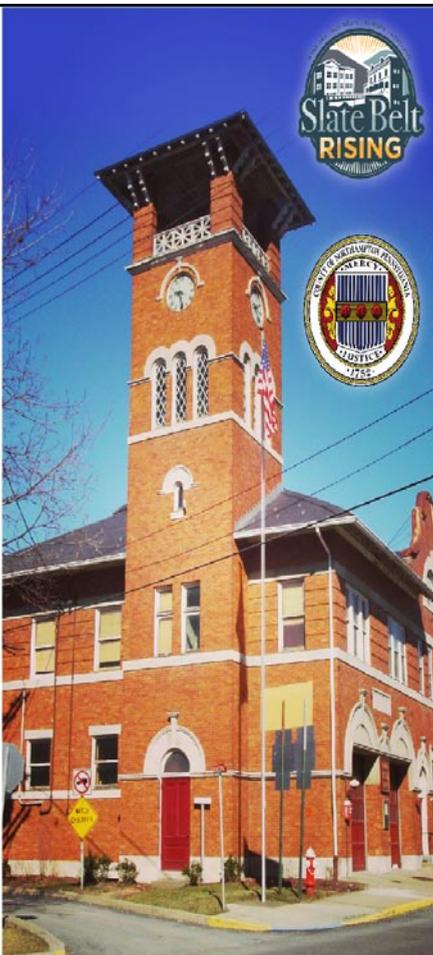
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International Women's Weekend

NMIH's International Women's Weekend

By NMIH

BETHLEHEM - NMIH is excited to announce the full schedule of events for International Women's Weekend! The National Museum of Industrial History will kick-off a month-long commemoration of the 100th Anniversary of Women's Suffrage in March with International Women's Weekend on March 7th and 8th. Women's Weekend will celebrate the voices and stories of women in industry through a full schedule of youth educational activities, guided tours and exhibit enhancements, live historical reenactments, Girl Scout badge programs, film screenings and lectures.

Go here for more info - <https://nmih.us11.list-manage.com/track/click?u=c7c1e7f76c1fc8b78e496affc&id=bd36e4086a&e=35110e8975>

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