QUEEN ANNE'S COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Where Our Future Begins

*****NEWS RELEASE*****
February 26, 2026

QACPS STUDENTS SHOWCASE TALENT AT SKILLSUSA EVENTS

(Pictured left to right: Mr. Jose Casillas (Electrical Instructor), Luke Moore, Brayden Kagle, Mr. Michael Blackiston (Masonry Instructor), Mr. Ronald Frederick (Carpentry Instructor), Dylan Timms, and Austin Slacum)

Centreville, MD – Queen Anne's County High School (QACHS) is proud to celebrate the growth of SkillsUSA within the Career and Technical Education (CTE) program at Queen Anne's County Public Schools. One of the key initiatives for the CTE program in QACPS has been expanding student access to SkillsUSA competitions. Two years ago, Mr. Frederick and one of his students competed in the Carpentry program, marking the beginning of this exciting journey. Last year, Mr. Blackiston had two students compete in Masonry, and one of Mr. Frederick's Carpentry students, Ethan Keppler, advanced from Regionals to compete at the state level. This year, that spark turned into a movement at our first-ever Local SkillsUSA Competition held at QACHS on Friday, February 13th.

More than 50 students stepped forward to compete across eight competitions: Welding, Carpentry, Masonry, Early Childhood Education, First Aid/CPR, Job Interview, Electrical, and Medical Terminology. For many, it was their first time competing. For all, it was an opportunity to showcase the skills they have worked so hard to develop in their classrooms and shops.

They did not just compete - they impressed.

Our students demonstrated confidence, professionalism, and technical skill in front of volunteer judges from local businesses who generously gave their time to support this event. Watching students explain their work, demonstrate their craftsmanship, and step outside of their comfort zones was something our school community will not soon forget.

Several students advanced to the regional competition held at Dorchester Career and Technical Center (DCTC) on Thursday, February 19, competing in Electrical, Masonry, and Carpentry. All four QACHS students competing at the regional level placed and are now advancing to the State SkillsUSA Competition in April in Carroll County!

Additionally, students who won local competitions in categories not held at Regionals will also advance directly to the state competition.

We are incredibly proud of every student who competed. This was the first time QACHS offered a competition of this scale, and our students rose to the occasion. They challenged themselves, supported one another, and represented their programs with integrity and excellence.

Local SkillsUSA Winners

Medical Terminology
1st – Kaley Deveaux
2nd – Gabriella Mattison
3rd – Kaeden Hawkins

Job Interview
1st – Jennifer Chavez
2nd – Caroline Gunter
3rd – Juliana Rodríguez

First Aid/CPR
1st – Morgan Morris
2nd – Cara Fellows
3rd – Jaxson Burnett

Masonry
1st – Dylan Timms
2nd – Austin Slacum
3rd – Kolbin Legg

Early Childhood Education
1st – Isabelle Scully
2nd – Bailee Hastings
3rd – Vera Meredith

Welding
1st – Hunter Bloodsworth
2nd – Jaxson Yiannakis
3rd – Thomas Truxon

Electrical
1st – Brayden Kagle
2nd – Christopher Jones
3rd – Seth Hager

Carpentry
1st – Luke Moore
2nd – Alex McDonald
3rd – Cameron Hurlock

Regional Level Winners

- Luke Moore – 3rd Place, Carpentry
- Austin Slacum – 1st Place, Masonry
- Dylan Timms – 2nd Place, Masonry
- Brayden Kagle – 1st Place, Electrical

All four regional competitors will move on to the State SkillsUSA Competition in April which will be held in Carroll County, MD.

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This event would not have been possible without the incredible support of our community. We extend heartfelt thanks to our CTE instructors, who work every day to prepare students not just for competition, but for careers. Their dedication is evident in every project completed and every student who had the courage to compete. Special appreciation is extended to SkillsUSA Advisor Betsy Ricketts for her leadership, coordination, and commitment to supporting students and staff throughout their Skills journey.

We also thank the members of the Board of Education for coming out to support and even serve as judges. Your presence meant so much to our students.

Special appreciation goes to the following businesses and partners who donated materials, time, and expertise:

- American Legion Post 278
- American Legion Post 18
- Dixon Valve
- New Edge Contractors
- Lywood Electric
- ER Harvey
- JJ Clow and Sons Electric
- Gipe Associates and Consulting Engineers
- E.D. Supply
- Potomac Valley Brick
- 84 Lumber
- IBEW Local 24
- Queen Anne's County Education Partnership
- Weltner Residential Services
- Chesapeake College

As our students prepare for the State Competition, we welcome continued community support. Donations of tools, monetary contributions, or the use of a passenger van for travel to Carroll County would make a meaningful difference. Those interested in supporting our students can reach out to Betsy Ricketts, SkillsUSA Advisor, at Betsy.Ricketts@qacps.org.

This is only the beginning. SkillsUSA is growing at QACHS, and our students are proving that when given the opportunity, they will rise - and shine!

For further information, please contact:

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