



Fact Sheet for SkillsUSA and WorldSkills USA Team

2026 WorldSkills Competition to be held Sept. 22-27 in Shanghai, China

About SkillsUSA

SkillsUSA is the #1 workforce development organization for students, empowering them to become skilled professionals, career-ready leaders and responsible community members. SkillsUSA represents more than 444,000 career and technical education students and teachers in middle schools, high schools and college/postsecondary institutions nationwide. Those members represent 130 in-demand occupational areas, from 3D animation to welding. A vital solution to the skills gap, SkillsUSA has served over 16 million members since its founding in 1965. Learn more at skillsusa.org.

2026 WorldSkills USA Team

SkillsUSA has fielded a team of talented young skilled trades experts who will represent the United States at the **48th WorldSkills Competition (WSC) to be held Sept. 22-27, 2026, in Shanghai, China**. Widely recognized as the “Olympics of skilled trades,” the competition brings together the best craftspeople from 90 countries and regions. SkillsUSA determines participation in specific WSC events based on the availability of a well-qualified competitor, a technical expert, confirmed industry commitment and financial resources for advanced training and support.

The full 2026 roster was officially announced during SkillsUSA’s National Leadership & Skills Conference (NLSC), held June 2026 in Atlanta before more than 19,000 attendees. The team brings together top state and national champions who advanced through rigorous competition to earn the honor of representing the United States on the global stage. Over the months leading up to the competition, team members will engage in virtual training sessions and intensive in-person practices across the United States, Europe and Asia to refine their skills to world-class standards.

For most skill competitions, a competitor at the WorldSkills Competition must be 22 or younger in the calendar year of the competition. Competitors in Mechatronics, as well as a few other technical fields, may be 25 or younger.

The 2026 WorldSkills USA delegation features competitors in eight areas:

- **Automobile Technology: James Cahill** (Missouri) — A skilled automotive student who has demonstrated mastery over complex mechanical diagnostics and vehicle systems.
- **Carpentry: Tristan Coates** (Florida) — A business owner and former national champion who brings extensive structural and craft excellence to the team.
- **CNC Milling: Alexis Squyres** (Pennsylvania) — A graduate of Thaddeus Stevens College of Technology and national bronze medalist, specializing in complex multi-axis precision machining.
- **Cooking: Elizabeth Brown** (Missouri) — A culinary champion prepared to showcase world-class culinary technique, speed and artistic precision.
- **Heavy Vehicle Technology: Benjamin Strupp** (Wisconsin) — An exceptional diesel technician specializing in heavy industrial machinery, diagnostics and large-scale transportation repair.
- **Mechatronics: Evan Chow and James Sutherland** (Tennessee) — A powerhouse duo representing Tennessee in the intensive two-person industrial automation and robotic systems engineering competition.
- **Plumbing and Heating: Charles Goede** (Connecticut) — A dedicated plumbing apprentice backed by broad industry support, mastering advanced fluid, pressure and climate systems.
- **Welding: Mikala Sposito** (Michigan) — A welding champion whose mentor is a former WorldSkills competitor, demonstrating exceptional precision in complex structural and metallurgical joining.

Technical Experts

SkillsUSA appoints a technical expert for each competition in which the United States competes. These experts personally train the competitor, plan and manage their training regimen, and enlist others within their industry for training and support. During the international competition, each technical expert works with technical experts from other countries to organize, conduct and judge that contest. Lists of the 2026 technical experts and industry sponsors are available at worldskillsusa.org.

WorldSkills

Since 1950, WorldSkills has come to symbolize the pinnacle of excellence in vocational training. It provides a unique means of exchange and comparison of world-class competency standards in the industrial trades and service sectors of the global economy. WorldSkills inspires young people to pursue a passion for skills and excellence through competitions and promotions, developing skills through global training standards, benchmarking systems and enhanced industry engagement.

About WorldSkills USA

SkillsUSA serves as the official U.S. representative to WorldSkills International, a global organization focused on elevating the visibility and recognition of skilled professionals. Under the name WorldSkills USA, SkillsUSA represents the United

States in WorldSkills competitions. SkillsUSA (then known as VICA) was designated in 1973, and the U.S. first participated in the WorldSkills Competition in 1975.

WorldSkills USA Team Sponsorship

The WorldSkills USA team is funded solely through private donations, and each team member is supported by business and industry partners. Supporters can back the team's journey to Shanghai at worldskillsusa.org/donate.

Resources and Links

Donate to the WorldSkills USA team at worldskillsusa.org/donate.

To ask questions or provide in-kind support, contact Brandon Hudson at bhudson@skillsusa.org.

For press inquiries, contact Clare Briner at cbriner@skillsusa.org

Learn more about WorldSkills and meet the 2026 WorldSkills USA team at worldskillsusa.org.

Visit the [SkillsUSA Press Room](#) for more about the organization.