

Georgia Carpentry Student Best in the Nation

Georgia had a great reminder recently of the importance of investing in our high school construction programs.

A young man named Corey Smith represented our state at the SkillsUSA National Championships in Kansas City on June 28. Corey is from Cedartown, about 70 miles northwest of Atlanta. He is a proud graduate of the construction program at Cedartown High School.

Corey Smith had one goal to achieve before closing out his high school career: Win the SkillsUSA National Championships in carpentry. In 2006, he came close, placing second in the nation. This year, with his father and construction teacher Todd Tillery looking on, Corey won the Gold Medal – beating out 40+ of the nation’s best carpentry students.



Corey’s trip to Kansas City was made possible by CEFGA and the Georgia Branch, AGC Young Leadership Program, which paid travel expenses for Corey and 13 other Georgia state champions.

Corey plans to enroll at Southern Polytechnic State University this fall and work in commercial construction, probably with a general contractor.

So think about this if you are spending time on college campuses looking for good project manager or superintendent candidates. Think about Corey Smith winning the SkillsUSA National Championships in carpentry, and his plans to pursue a career in construction.

Continue to recruit from and support your construction management programs. But, you may want to think about adding a new tool to your recruitment tool box: the high school construction and drafting program. After all, there are more than 280 of these programs with more than 20,000 students enrolled in Georgia. Support them; get involved; get to know the high school construction teacher; get to know the students who are the future leaders of our industry.

CEFGA is a nonprofit organization dedicated to promoting careers in construction and addressing the industry's labor shortage. CEFGA achieves its mission by connecting the construction industry and the education system in Georgia. To learn more or to view a list of CEFGA-accredited high school construction programs, visit cefga.org or call 678-889-4445.