

# Technical talent

## McCann, Taconic send skilled students to competition

[By Jenn Smith, Berkshire Eagle Staff](#)

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NORTH ADAMS — Payroll accounting, automotive service technology — there's a competition for that.

In fact, there are two contests in the United States for trade and vocational skills. And Berkshire County has some of the top student finalists in them.

McCann Technical School will be sending 11 students to the SkillsUSA Championships in Kansas City, a national competition that includes the top ranked contestants from local and state competitions. McCann is the only school in the county to compete in it.

"It's nice to know we're among the best in the state," said Garret Harvey, a senior who will compete in the category of industrial motor control, a discipline in electrical circuitry. McCann will also send five students to the National Leadership Conference, a competitive workplace skills assessment program of the Business Professionals of America (BPA). The contest will take place June 17 through 20 in Dallas.

Taconic High School in Pittsfield, the only other school in the county to compete in this BPA event, qualified at the state level to send more than 20 students to the national competition, but will only send about half that many students because of financial constraints.

The Northern Berkshire Vocational School District is able to finance the students' trips through grants and school funds, whereas Taconic students rely more on raising their own funds.

"We really got hit this year. It's a shame, but we're proud of them all," said Lynn DiSimoni, a co-coordinator of the Taconic team.

Amanda Cariddi, a sophomore at McCann who will compete in the BPA categories of presentation management and keyboarding production, said she likes the opportunity to excel and be recognized in her area of study.

"Some people look down on you because you go to technical school, but this is an amazing opportunity that's useful in your field when you get out of school," Cariddi said.

Alexander Segala, a senior SkillsUSA contestant, will compete with his partner Robert Dougherty in the category of "mechatronics," a field of complex automated manufacturing.

"It's a good representation of our education and the real jobs that are out there. Plus, we work with industry representatives who can give us a job boost," Segala said.

"What's amazing to me," said James Brosnan, superintendent of Northern Berkshire Regional school district, "is that these competitions bring together everyone's best in the state.

"It's a tribute to the dogged professionalism of these students, and the teachers and families that support them."

### *The contenders*

#### **McCann Technical School's SkillsUSA Championship contestants:**

*Automated manufacturing technology team: Kristin Euchler, Kristie Kordana and Emily Serrano*

*3-D visualization and animation: Eric Euchler and Joshua LaBonte*

*Industrial motor control: Garret Harvey*

*Mechatronics: Robert Dougherty and Alexander Segala*

*Medical Assisting (postsecondary): Elizabeth Pitroff*

*Web design: Mike Senay and Taylor Wadsworth*

***Business Professionals of America National Leadership Conference:***

***McCann Tech participants:***

*Kayla Bissonette, Leadership Academy intern*

*Amanda Cariddi, presentation management, keyboarding production*

*Bryana Malloy, integrated office applications, fundamental word processing skills*

*Samantha Ritcher, presentation management, integrated office applications*

*Kayla Whitman, Leadership Academy intern*

***Taconic qualifiers (\* indicates participants):***

*Fundamental accounting: Kellie Bartley, Christine Niccoli\*, Casey Winston*

*Economic research project team: Kristen Negrini, Casey Winston, Kira Brown; Madeline Bianchi, Taylor Jacoby, Jenna Campbell, Elizabeth Buckley*

*Administrative support research project (individual): Kristen Negrini, Rochelle LaFrance*

*Global marketing team: Lynsay Bell\*, Amy Pannesco\*, Bailey Robinson, Scot Coty*

*Small business management team: Jayde Carlson\*, Erik Pieropan, Cory Decker, Scot Coty\**

*Human resource management: Casey Winston, Courtney Nason-Farrell\*, Kevin MacDonald*

*Prepared Speech: James Forgett, Madeline Bianchi, Taylor Jacoby\**

*Presentation management (individual): Kellie Bartley, Mike Burton*

*Presentation management (team): Mike Herbert\*, Dan Hewitt, Mike Keegan\**

*Financial analyst team: Darran Colvin, Kyle Betters, Nic Klemansky, Hayden Rennie*

*Keyboarding: Andrea Arena, Jenna Campbell\**

*Graphic design promotion: Darran Colvin*

*Payroll accounting: Nic Klemansky, Kellie Bartley*

*Banking & finance: Jenna Campbell\*, Eric Pieropan*

*Advanced accounting: Courtney Nason-Farrell\**

*Desktop publishing: Joe Teti*

*Leadership Academy participants: Taylor Jacoby, Madeline Bianchi, Jenna Campbell, Andrew George, Abigail McDermott*