



Sheet Metal apprentices shine at regional contest

Three apprentices from the HVAC & Metals Institute — members of Sheet Metal Workers Local 16 in Portland — received the “highest combined score” trophy at the annual regional apprenticeship contest, held Jan. 19-20 in Pasco, Washington.

Contestants from Local 16 included Cyndy Chan of Vancouver Roofing and Sheet Metal; Jeff Rydquist of General Sheet Metal Works, and Matt Armstrong of R&J Metal Fabricators.

Chan (pictured above) captured first in the TAB (testing, adjusting and balancing airflow) competition to qualify for the national finals March 27-30 in Las Vegas. It will be her second trip to the finals, which pits top apprentices from every region of the United States. In 2004 Chan placed 7th.

Jeff Rydquist (photo right) finished second in HVAC (heating, ventilating and air conditioning) and will be an alternate if the winner cannot fulfill his commitment.

Matt Armstrong placed third in industrial sheet metal.

The regional contest is a grueling two-day event testing apprentices in three specialty areas: including written and welding exams, blueprint reading, drafting, fabrication and duct redesign. Competitors come from Oregon, Washington, Alaska and British Columbia.

“The level of competition was extremely high and the scores of the top competitors were very close,” said Ric Olander, assistant coordinator of the HVAC & Metals Institute in Portland.

Oregon has one of the best sheet



metal training programs in the country. The institute is a \$3.5 million state-of-the-art facility with top-notch instructors and staff, and an award-winning international curriculum.

“The main purpose of apprenticeship is to train, but sometimes we forget all of the benefits available to apprentices,” Olander said. “College credit hours, continuing education, extremely competitive pay, and an outstanding benefits package, to name just a few.”

Besides the opportunity to compete, the apprentices also had a chance to win prizes. Chris Smith of FM Sheet Metal, who attends classes at the Eugene Campus of the HVAC & Metals Institute, won a Lincoln SP175 welder.



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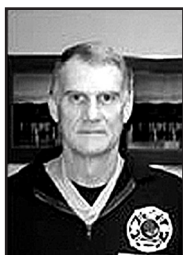
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‘Residential Fire Sprinkler Night’
at the Portland Winterhawks
Friday, March 3, 7 p.m., Rose Garden

At the end of the first period, apprentices from UA Local 290 will take on firefighters from Local 43 in a “Broom Ball” hockey game. Contestants will don tennis shoes and plastic brooms as they try to slap a foam ball into the net.

Come out and root for your favorite team and look at the latest in home residential fire sprinkler systems.

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