

Where is the Canadian Skills Competition 2009 taking place? Right here on PEI!

by Gloria Welton

Trades and Technology

From **May 20 to 23**, over 500 competitors and 700 coaches, judges, technical experts, and teachers will be participating in the 15th annual **Canadian Skills Competition**. “We are expecting over 6,000 students and members of the public to tour the event,” says **Don Carroll**, CSC 2009 Project Manager. “This is the first time this event has been held on PEI.”

Skills Canada is a not-for-profit organization that works with employers, educators, labour groups and governments. They work to equip youth with the skills that will help Canada compete successfully in a drastically changing

world market. “We recognize excellence and raise awareness and interest in skilled trades and technologies as a preferred career path for young Canadians,” says Don.

Representing PEI are 46 gold medal winners from the **PEI Provincial Skills Competition**, which was held earlier this spring. They will compete in 30 trades and technology categories at both the secondary and post-secondary level.

For more information or to volunteer at the event, contact **Don Carroll** at **566-9514**. Visit www.skills2009.ca

For more information about **Skills Canada PEI**, contact **Tawna MacLeod**, Acting Executive Director, at **566-9352**. Visit www.skillscanada.pe.ca

The PEI Provincial Skills Competition was funded in part by the Government of Canada's Youth Employment Strategy.

Here are the profiles of three provincial gold medal winners who are getting ready for CSC 2009:



Jenny Gillis is a grade 11 student at Charlottetown Rural High School. She won the gold medal in the Cooking category at the PEI Provincial Skills Competition. Now she is preparing for the national skills competition. Jenny will be training under **Chef Instructor Hans Anderegg** of the Holland College Culinary Institute of Canada. “Jenny will be working with a world renowned Chef,” says Family Studies/ Foods and Nutrition teacher **Mrs. Anne Dixon**. “This is an amazing opportunity.”

“I competed last year in the provincials and came third,” says Jenny. “I love to cook at home for my family and I have a job at **Urban Eatery** working in the kitchen. It is fun to explore different recipes and look at peoples' expressions when they try what I have prepared.”

Before the provincials, Jenny and nine other competitors knew the recipe choices they would prepare during the four-hour competition. “I prepared an entrée, main dish and a dessert,” says Jenny. “The menu selection was quite extensive but I turned any nervousness into concentrating on my task.”

“I was very excited when I heard that I won gold. This opportunity gives me a chance to work with the best and this will look great on my résumé. I am not exactly sure what my plans are for after high school but this experience will definitely help when I apply to post-secondary education.”



Corey A. Blois is this year's gold medal winner at the PEI Provincial Skills Competitions in the post-secondary Electrical Wiring category.

Corey is currently in the **Electrical Construction Wiring** program at Holland College. He was one of nine students competing for the award.

“For the provincial competitions, they gave us a diagram to follow that included pipe bending, residential wiring and setting up a heating system,” says Corey. “We had to make sure that everything was done correctly, to a certain measurement and to the Canadian Electrical Code standard.”

“I'm really looking forward to see how I measure up to my fellow competitors at the nationals in May. It will be a nice opportunity to take everything I have learned in the program and actually apply it.”

Corey, who is from Nova Scotia, says he has applied for employment with a number of Island and off-Island companies. “Winning the gold medal for PEI certainly looks good on a résumé,” he says. “I think finding work will not be too difficult. Once I have a job, I plan to work toward my Red Seal certification.”



Chris Briand is grade 12 student at **Souris Regional High School**. He knows how to win big at the **PEI Provincial Skills Competition**. Chris took home gold for the **Graphic Design Secondary** competitions in 2008 and 2009.

“I didn't expect to win again this year,” says Chris. “With the support of my teachers, I entered not to win but for the experience.”

“Last year, I traveled to Calgary for the nationals. I didn't take home a medal but it was a great trip and my first visit to Alberta. I met many like-minded people at the event who I still keep in contact with.”

For this year's entry, Chris created a logo for an upcoming event to be incorporated into a poster and a name tag.

The art of graphic design is more than just a hobby for Chris. It's been a long-time passion that he plans to pursue as a career. He already has a good head start. He is employed with a local photographer, editing, taking photos, and developing advertising material. Chris also volunteers his time by creating advertisement material for a non-profit organization.

“There is a variety of career choices in graphic design,” says Chris. “I am not sure which area I will pursue yet. My work experience, competition wins and my portfolio should look good for post-secondary entrance requirements and later on a résumé.”