



Northwest Iowa

Community College

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NEWS

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Northwest Iowa Community College Students Place Second in Ford/AAA Auto Skills State Championship

Two of Northwest Iowa Community College's High School Automotive Technology students, Jacob Pollema from Trinity Christian and Alex Blankespoor from Unity Christian, earned second place honors after competing as a team in the Ford/AAA Auto Skills contest held May 13 at Des Moines Area Community College, Ankeny, Iowa.

In February high school students enrolled in NCC's Transportation program took an online qualifying exam. Only the ten highest scoring two-person teams from across the state were selected to advance to the state finals, with only one team eligible per instructor. At the state finals, teams raced against the clock to correctly diagnose and repair a deliberately "bugged" 2014 Ford Fiesta placed by Ford engineers. A combination of the online exam and hands-on competition scores determined each state's championship team.

Pollema and Blankespoor were one of nine teams to compete at this year's state championship. They were only one of three teams that were able to complete this task in the one and a half hour time limit and qualified to be judged.

Mark Steinle, NCC Automotive Instructor said, "They made it interesting because they crossed the finish line with only thirty seconds to spare! Of course, they thought they had it timed perfectly. Nationally only one to three teams has had their cars cross the finish line in the allotted time. So, I think the students did an awesome job and have made us very proud!"

To prepare for the competition Northwest Iowa Community College partnered with Ford dealer, Marthaler Ford located in Worthington, MN. Steinle commented, "We knew they were going to be "debugging" a 2014 Ford Fiesta, so I contacted Marthaler Ford and asked if they could bring a Fiesta to campus for the students to familiarize themselves with it." Steinle continued, "We would like to thank Marthaler Ford for supporting NCC's students and Automotive program."

This year, nearly 13,000 high school juniors and seniors competed in the Ford/AAA Student Auto Skills competition. The students represented more than 958 automotive technology programs from all fifty states.

Pollema and Blankespoor are attending NCC and are earning college credit through a dual enrollment program that is a partnership between NCC and their high schools. NCC has a strong history of working with K- 12 school districts to provide opportunities for high school students to earn college credit while still in high school.

Blankespoor said, “As a high school senior attending NCC it is great because I get to see what next year will be like. I am getting a feel for college before I even graduate from high school. I chose the automotive program because I like working with my hands, I don’t like sitting behind a desk, and I really like problem solving. I also like that I am in the automotive program and have saved myself a full semester of tuition!”

For more information about NCC’s Automotive Technology program or High School dual enrollment programs or to find out more about any of NCC’s more than forty programs of study contact the Admissions Office at studentservices@nwicc.edu , call 800-352-4907 or 324-5061, or visit our website at www.nwicc.edu. At NCC There’s a Place For You!

Photo L-R: Alex Blankespoor, Orange City; Jacob Pollema, Doon