

## **School District of New Berlin's SkillsUSA Program Enjoys Growth, Success in Second Year**

New Berlin, Wis. - Earlier this spring, the School District of New Berlin sent 19 SkillsUSA students to the 44th Annual Wisconsin Skills and Leadership Conference at the Alliant Energy Center in Madison, culminating a season that saw the program grow from three participants to 22 in one year.

District students competed in eight different competitions with some students competing in multiple competition. New Berlin West earned the following awards:

- Alexandra Maniscalco, gold, promotional bulletin board, high school division
- Grace Catanese, gold, promotional bulletin board, middle school division
- Alexander Grant, gold, woodworking display, middle school division

Maniscalco, who earned the gold medal in the promotional bulletin board competition, will attend the national competition in Louisville in June.

In a competition held in early April, students from West and Eisenhower - John Tisoris, Michael Poepping, Luke Eldien and Evan Mason - earned bronze in TeamWorks, a competition sponsored by Milwaukee National Association of the Remodeling Industry, or NARI.

"Overall this season was a huge success," SDNB SkillsUSA advisor Gretta Balczewski said. "The students all did well and I am so proud to have been a small part of their journey. We are excited for nationals and the 2017-18 competition season."

Three students joined SkillsUSA last school year when the district added it to its co-curricular lineup as part of its efforts to personalize career and technical education programming for students interested in specific areas such as manufacturing, business and marketing, construction and skilled trades, and more. Twenty-two students joined this school year.

SkillsUSA focuses on career- and technology-based education that gives students technical skills, academic skills and employability skills needed to succeed in life. In addition, career and technical education helps students see how what they are learning applies to the needs of employers. SkillsUSA works hand-in-hand with business and industry, allowing students to get the professional skills employers want such as communications, interpersonal abilities, time management, teamwork and more.

In additional SkillsUSA news, Balczewski was named the new technical chair for Promotional Bulletin Board and Chapter Display at the Wisconsin state level, and was added to the middle school engagement committee.