

FLORIDA - ADVANCED TECHNOLOGICAL EDUCATION  
CENTER for MANUFACTURING EDUCATION

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**HCC and FLATE host SkillsUSA Manufacturing State Championships**

On Tuesday (04/24/07) students from across Florida came to the Hillsborough Community College Brandon Campus to compete in contests related to advanced manufacturing as part of the Florida SkillsUSA State Skills and Leadership Conference. As Dr. Eric Roe, the Director of FLATE, the Florida Center for Manufacturing Education located at HCC Brandon, welcomed the students he discussed the importance of high technology in Florida manufacturing, he said "The promise and challenge of sustaining and growing Florida's manufacturing industry presents special challenges due to its scope and diversity, durable and consumable goods are manufactured here, including many products requiring specialized processes." Dr. Roe added, "Florida manufacturers share an increasing reliance on automated, computer-integrated control processes and "lean" manufacturing principles. New and incumbent workers need fundamental knowledge, specialized skill sets, and portable production skills to meet the needs of the high performance manufacturing workplace. SkillsUSA creates a mechanism for students to hone these skills while learning the leadership qualities necessary to succeed in today's global marketplace."

The contests (Robotic Workcell Technology and Automated Manufacturing Technology) are part of the three day conference being held at Manatee Technical Institute in Bradenton, Florida. Both the winning teams were from Treasure Coast High School in St. Lucie County. "We are very proud of our teams' accomplishments," said Ted Norman, the engineering and manufacturing career academy director at Treasure Coast H.S. "All the students that participated in the manufacturing competitions are true champions in their

dedication to excellence in high-technology and their leadership skills.” As gold medalists, the teams also won the right of heading to Kansas City, Missouri to compete in the SkillsUSA National Leadership and Skills Conference which will be held June 28-29, 2007. More than 5,000 outstanding career and technical education students—all state contest winners—will compete hands-on in 87 different trade, technical and leadership fields. Students work against the clock and each other, proving their expertise in occupations such as electronics, computer-aided drafting, precision machining, medical assisting and culinary arts. Contests are run with the help of industry, trade associations, and labor organizations, and test competencies established by industry. Leadership contestants will demonstrate skills including extemporaneous speaking and conducting meetings by parliamentary procedure.

**SkillsUSA** is a national partnership of students, teachers and industry, working together to ensure America has a skilled workforce. SkillsUSA chapters help students who are preparing for careers in technical, skilled and service occupations excel. Formerly known as VICA (Vocational Industrial Clubs of America) SkillsUSA has more than 280,000 students and instructors as members annually. See [www.skillsusa.info](http://www.skillsusa.info) for more information.

**FLATE** (Florida - Advanced Technological Education) Center for Manufacturing Education is a National Science Foundation center, committed to ensuring that Florida manufacturing has a well prepared workforce. It advances this mission through three principal initiatives: 1) promotion of technologically oriented manufacturing and technology careers to middle and secondary school students, 2) professional development of teachers throughout the K-16 educational system, 3) reform and realignment of the curriculum that defines Florida’s academic programs related to manufacturing. Created in 2004, it is one of 33 in the United States focused on improving science, technology, engineering, and mathematics education to meet the needs of American advanced-technology industries. For more information, please visit: [www.fl-ate.org](http://www.fl-ate.org) and [www.madeinflorida.org](http://www.madeinflorida.org).

**Hillsborough Community College – Brandon campus** serves approximately 6800 students per semester and is home to the college's manufacturing related academic programs as well as FLATE and the Employ Florida Banner Center for Manufacturing. Here students can learn the high-tech skills needed in modern manufacturing, such as controls, hydraulics, pneumatics, robotics, computer aided drafting, and automation. District wide, Hillsborough Community College serves more than 40,000 students on campuses on Dale Mabry Highway and in Ybor City, Plant City and Brandon. HCC also serves students at learning centers on MacDill Air Force Base and in Ruskin. HCC was the recipient of the 2006 Association of Community College Trustees (ACCT) Equity award. HCC is accredited by the Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (1866 Southern Lane, Decatur, Georgia 30033-4097, Telephone 404-679-4501) to award associate degrees, diplomas, and certificates. For more information, please visit: [www.hccfl.edu](http://www.hccfl.edu).

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