



Photo by Kendra Gravelle

Coventry's SkillsUSA Rhode Island medalists were recognized during Thursday's school committee meeting. Pictured left to right: Romulus Sena, Weston Brillhart, Matthew Davidson, Derek Moore, Jayden Briggs, Leah Andre and Alexis Verdelotti.

# GOT SKILLS?

## School committee celebrates 11 medalists during meeting

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**COVENTRY** — The Coventry School Committee kicked off its meeting last week by celebrating a group of Coventry Career and Technical Center students who took home nearly a dozen medals in total during last month's SkillsUSA Rhode Island Championships.

"You've made us proud," School Committee Vice Chair David Florio told the medal winners Thursday night amid several rounds of applause and a chorus of congratulations.

A total of 11 medals were earned by the Coventry students, having proven their expertise in fields including culinary arts, criminal justice and cosmetology.

Of those medal-winners, five who received gold will head in June to the SkillsUSA National Leadership and Skills Conference in Louisville, Kentucky, where they'll compete among some 6,500 of their counterparts from across the country.

After introducing each of the medal winners Thursday, Lori Ferguson, director of the Coventry Career and Technical Center, lauded them for their tireless efforts and the bravery they demonstrated in competition.

"It is a lot of hard work for these guys," Ferguson said, as seven of Coventry's champions stood beside her.

"They are competing against all the students in Rhode Island in each of these fields," she continued. "It's very intimidating to go there, you don't really know what to expect until you're in

the competition."

Last month's SkillsUSA RI Championships invited career and technical education students from across the state to demonstrate their abilities in more than 60 different fields of study. And the competition varied depending on the field, said Alexis Verdelotti, a junior in Coventry's health careers program.

"Some people have written tests, mock job interviews, some of us do our specific skills and some have to do a written and oral test," explained Verdelotti, a gold medal draped around her neck.

Verdelotti, who earned gold in nursing assisting, is one of the five Coventry students who will head to nationals later this year.

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Senior Jayden Briggs will also head to Kentucky for taking gold in cabinet making. Junior Matthew Davidson will compete, as well, having won gold in comput-

er programming, as will junior Leah Andre, who took gold in medical math.

And having taken the top spots in both the automotive service technician SkillsUSA competition and the Rhode Island Auto Dealer's Competition, senior Romulus Sena has a couple of big weekends

ahead of him.

Sena and Sean Lambert, also a senior, have been hard at work training to compete in the National Automotive Technology Show, set to take place next Monday through Wednesday in New York. The students have been honing their skills on a 2019 ve-

hicle lent by Anchor Subaru for the cause.

Three SkillsUSA silver medalists were also recognized during last week's school committee meeting. Senior Derek Moore earned silver in cabinet making, while senior Noah Anderson took silver for culinary arts

and senior Michael Furtado earned silver in computer programming.

Taking home bronze medals were senior Ben Reed, for criminal justice, and juniors Madison Flint, for esthetics, and Weston Brillhart, for computer programming. "It really takes a lot of

guts to [compete]," Ferguson continued Thursday, just before those in attendance rose to applaud the students' accomplishments. "I'm proud of the risk they've taken amongst their peers, and I'm certainly proud of their achievement."