



**Contact:**

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**EMBARGOED UNTIL 5:00 A.M., WEDNESDAY, MARCH 4, 2015**

**Area SCILL Auto Tech Students Participate In Regional Competition**

STARKE COUNTY – Four students of the Starke County Initiative for Lifelong Learning (SCILL) Auto Tech program recently participated for the first time in regional competition at the 2015 SkillsUSA Regional Auto Service Competition held at the Elkhart Area Career Center. As part of the North Central Indiana Vocational Co-operative, students were from various area schools: Jacob Boyer, John Glenn; Austin Burton, Knox; Travis Doan, LaVille; and Bennett Ullery, Triton. SCILL instructors Josh Holdread and Scott Manns coached the group.

The competition included 23 students from career centers in Elkhart, Monticello, Michigan City and Hammond, as well as SCILL, in Knox. Each participant had to complete a written test, including 150 ASE-based questions, and individual skill competition at 10 work stations, each involving a problem to be solved in a different area of automotive technology. The top five individual finishers move on to the State competition, then onto the Nationals.

Boyer and Doan tied for sixth best score on the ASE written test, and Doan had the highest score of all competitors on the Steering and Suspension work station, scoring 48 out of 50. Each of the students received a scholarship of their choice, either a \$500 scholarship to Ohio Technical College, in Cleveland, or a \$1,000 scholarship to Lincoln Tech, in Indianapolis. Three of the four participants are considering attending Lincoln Tech's two-year associate degree program.

Ron Gifford, special project coordinator with the Starke County Economic Development Foundation and director of SCILL, said, "Students from four different schools worked together to prepare for the competition and came back very excited, encouraging others to participate. The coaches couldn't be involved during the competition, but gathered to exchange ideas, share experiences and provide tips to each other."

SkillsUSA is a national partnership of students, teachers and industry working together to help students excel and to ensure America has a skilled workforce. Serving more than 300,000 students and instructors annually, SkillsUSA provides a structured program of citizenship, leadership, employability, technical and professional skills training.

**ABOUT STARKE COUNTY INITIATIVE FOR LIFELONG LEARNING (SCILL)**

SCILL was created in 1996 by the Starke County Economic Development Foundation, to assure employers that a qualified workforce would be available in Starke County. SCILL, working in conjunction with area employers, provides a customized, innovative training program that meets the needs of area employers and employees and

also offers high quality vocational educational programs in automotive technology and welding. For more details, visit [www.scill.biz](http://www.scill.biz).

#### **ABOUT SCEDF**

The Starke County Development Foundation is a not-for-profit local economic development organization (LEDO) providing economic development opportunities on behalf of Starke County, Indiana, the City of Knox, and the Towns of North Judson and Hamlet through the development of industrial parks, rail spurs, greenfield sites, shovel-ready sites, infrastructure and workforce development. For more information regarding Starke County Development Foundation, visit [www.starkecounty.com](http://www.starkecounty.com).



SCILL students and staff participating in regional SkillsUSA Auto Service Competition at the Elkhart Area Career Center included (L to R): Josh Holdread, instructor; Bennett Ullery, second-year student from Triton; first year students: Travis Doan, LaVille; Austin Burton, Knox; and Jacob Boyer, John Glenn; and Scott Manns, instructor.

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