



## Media Release

**Immediate Release: May 1, 2009**

### **Rideau DHS Grad Competing in 2009 WorldSkills Competition for Carpentry**

**(Westport)** – In an opportunity he's calling "once in a lifetime," Scott Blair, a Rideau District High School graduate and newly-licensed carpenter will be competing in the 2009 WorldSkills Competition in Calgary, Alberta from September 1 to 7.

"I'm really looking forward to the competition," said the 21-year-old last week during a training session at Algonquin College. "The Worlds happen every other year and you have to be 22 or younger to compete. This is my one chance."

Blair is the only carpenter out of 38 Team Canada members to compete at WorldSkills, an event that will see more than 900 competitors from 50 different countries. He qualified for WorldSkills after earning bronze at the Canadian Skills Competition in 2008, an event that followed his long competition history. Since 2005, Blair has competed in a number of Skills/Compétences Canada – Ontario Provincials competitions, including Nationals in 2005 where he won silver and Provincials in 2005 and 2008 where he walked away with gold.

Today, Blair is an Algonquin College carpentry graduate and full-time carpenter. He trains 20 hours a week with national trainer and former instructor, Daniel Brigham at the college, and works at home in his workshop most evenings.

Although he's had great support from college instructors, contractors and community members, Blair attributes a lot of his success to his RDHS construction technology teacher, Douglas Miller.

"I really enjoyed carpentry in high school shop classes with Doug," Blair said. "He was always helpful with difficult projects."

Blair, who was taught by Miller all through high school, said he's grateful for the time his teacher took to foster his talents.

"In Grade 10, I was allowed to build a rocking bench; a project that's supposed to be done in Grade 12," Blair said. "I've always been the hands-on type and I found shop class a lot of fun."

So fun, in fact, that each year he received the highest marks in his class.

"I actually had the highest marks all throughout college too," he laughed. "They say the carpentry license test has an 80 per cent failure rate. I got 89 per cent on my first try."

In his spare time, Blair likes to participate in local woodworking and home shows. On May 8 to 9, he'll be exhibiting his work in a booth beside Miller and his students at the Brockville Lions' Woodworking Show at the Brockville Memorial Centre.

"At the show, I'm going to build a small scale model house that Miller can use in his class," Blair said. "It then can be used as a teaching aid in his classroom."

Although not certain of what his future holds following the WorldSkills event, Blair is sure of his goal leading up to it.

"I'm going for the gold," he said.

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