

## Mingus welding team wins bronze at nationals

*Team won gold two years in state championship*



Philip Wright  
Staff Reporter

COTTONWOOD - The Mingus Union High School Welding Fabrication team won a bronze medal during the SkillsUSA National Championships during June in Kansas City, Mo.

The team, made up of John Stratz, Kyle Alexander and Mason Hart, qualified for the nationals by winning a gold medal during the SkillsUSA State Championship during April in Phoenix. It was the second year in a row for the team to win gold during state competition.

Junior Elias Luna competed in Technical Drafting, winning silver in the SkillsUSA State Championship and finishing 13th in the nationals out of more than 40 other high school competitors.

CTE teacher Andrew Lamer said Stratz and Alexander graduated this year, but Hart will be back as a senior to lead the welding team next year. Lamer said competitors in the Welding Fabrication competition received this year's project criteria in early May. The criteria consisted of a welding demonstration table, a list of the materials given, a list of the different welds required and a list of the tools provided.

The team spent most of May brainstorming, designing and finalizing blueprints for the project. Lamer said the team built three practice tables during the weeks leading up to the nationals.

"During the competition the teams had six and a half hours to build their table. While working they were judged by professionals from the welding industry on safety, teamwork, fabrication, welding ability, and their project blueprints turned in prior to the competition," Lamer said.

He said the team members also were required to turn in a resume and complete a SkillsUSA welding knowledge test before competing.

"Scoring above the average in all areas and receiving a bonus for efficient use of materials, the team earned bronze medals in a competition with 22 other high school teams from around the country," Lamer said.

Lamer said that all four of the MUHS competitors earned certificates from the National Skills Commission stating that during their competitions they met or exceeded the standards set by industry in their respective competitions.



Courtesy Photo  
The MUHS Welding Fabrication Team, John Stratz, left, Mason Hart and Kyle Alexander, won a bronze medal in June during the SkillsUSA National Championships in Kansas City, Mo.