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Skillbuild search is now on

Skillbuild NI Ltd. and the South Eastern Regional College (SERC) have launched the search for Northern Ireland's most talented construction apprentice.

The Skillbuild NI national competition, which will be held on April 13 and 14 at SERC's Skills Centre in Newtownards, is a skills competition designed to challenge the best young talent in the construction industry. It has been developed to promote excellence among young craftspeople throughout Northern Ireland.

Providing a unique stage to showcase excellence and talent, Skillbuild NI National Competition is hosted annually each spring and 100 of the top apprentices compete to win coveted titles in 13 different construction craft areas ranging from brickwork to wall and floor tiling.

The Skillbuild NI competition gold medal winners can then go forward to compete in the UK finals held annually each autumn. Medal success at that level gives the apprentice the opportunity to take part in

specialist training and compete in elite competitions for the opportunity to be part of the UK Skills Team representing the UK in WorldSkills.

This year, WorldSkills comes to London between October 5 and 8 and seven local construction apprentices have been selected for Squad UK, undertaking rigorous training and practical trials prior to potential selection to Team UK later this summer.

Speaking at the launch, David Cooper, chairman of Skillbuild, said that skills competitions were an excellent way to showcase the wealth of opportunity that exists in the construction industry.

And Brian McMullen, competitions manager at SERC added: "Our students have had great success over the years at the Skillbuild NI national competition and we're proud of our links with them. We currently have three students who are in Squad UK and challenging for a place at the London WorldSkills this October: Luke Hawthorne (carpentry) and Stuart Miller and Bryan Craig (both

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Getting set for Skillbuild 2011! Stuart Millar, Brian Craig and Luke Hawthorne from South Eastern Regional College help launch the Skillbuild 2011 competition which takes place at SERC's Newtownards.

refrigeration) are representing SERC and Northern Ireland in the training squad.

The competition is open to public viewing and entrance is free.

Further details can be found at www.skillbuildni.org or by contacting Katherine Pollock 028 9082 4209 or Brian McMullen 07810 378066.