

# WORLD SKILLS FOUNDATION STORYBOOK



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# ONCE UPON A TIME



Back in 1998, after I'd joined the WorldSkills Board as Vice President for Special Affairs, we launched a new kind of challenge called "Skills Across the World" to provide past Competitors with the opportunity to put their own mark on the WorldSkills vision to improve our world with the power of skills.

I envisaged the creation of a "Skills Corps" (much like the US Peace Corps) where teams of volunteers from different WorldSkills Member countries and regions in trades like Bricklaying, Carpentry, and Plumbing and Heating would spend time in communities in Africa to work alongside the locals to improve basic school infrastructure and pass on the necessary skills.

Unfortunately the limited coordination funding I was able to provide for the initiative through my own organization in Australia ran out before we'd secured a sustainable base of support to keep the initiative going.



Tjerk Dusseldorp (left) supports Skills Across the World, with skills development projects in Zimbabwe, Kenya, East Timor, and Balkinu Community in Cape York.



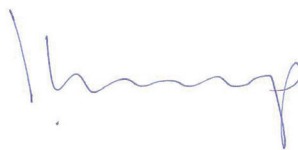
Angel Gabilondo, Spanish Minister of Education (left) and Tjerk Dusseldorp (right) sign the agreement for the creation of WorldSkills Foundation in Madrid, April 2011.

By that time I was elected President of WorldSkills, and I became determined to create a Foundation that would be an ongoing source of inspiration and funding for the WorldSkills network to initiate meaningful projects beyond the Competition.

The key obstacle was that most of the Members of WSI are government agencies that are restricted in terms of ways in which they can allocate funds. So even though there was widespread support among the Members for WorldSkills to become proactive beyond the Competition, it was agreed that the needed financial support would have to be found outside WSI, and that fund raising efforts should not be complete in any way with the existing or potential sponsorship resources for the sustainability of competitions.

It took time to overcome these hurdles, but by the end of 2011 - just as I was finishing my final terms as President - we were able to launch the WorldSkills Foundation (WSF) with six global funding partners committing a total of Euro 1.8 million over three years.

Looking back at what we've achieved over the past three years, I believe our most successful work has been to re-launch the earlier "Skills Across the World" initiative, but with a focus on water and sanitation. While this may not appear as exciting as our other projects such as "WorldSkills Digital Challenge", which we will be launching alongside WorldSkills São Paulo 2015, it is making a big impact to the communities we are helping. I believe the ongoing contributions of our Champions and Experts to those most in need will both sustain the Foundation's ongoing support and help earn WorldSkills the wider public recognition that it deserves.



**Tjerk Dusseldorp**  
**WorldSkills Foundation Chairman**



Tjerk Dusseldorp (right) meet with the Champions who participated in WSF's projects at the Thank-You Gathering 2014 in Madrid.



WSF Project Developers - Grace Lung (centre) and Seán Kearney (right) - meet with Tjerk Dusseldorp (left) in Singapore for discussing the future of WSF.

Oct 2011

WORLDSKILLS FOUNDATION CREATED

Oct 2012

MODELLING VOCATIONAL EXCELLENCE (MoVE)

Feb 2013

SANITATION STUDIOS NEPAL

Mar 2013

INNOVATION LAB VIRTUAL 3D LEARNING: FLORISTRY

Jul 2013

INNOVATION LAB VIRTUAL 3D LEARNING VISITOR EXPERIENCE AT WSC2013

Oct 2013

SANITATION STUDIOS BANGLADESH

Jan 2014

SANITATION STUDIOS NEPAL

Mar 2014

SANITATION STUDIOS SOUTH AFRICA

Mar 2014

INNOVATION LAB VIRTUAL 3D LEARNING: FACILITIES MANAGEMENT

May 2014

SKILLS COMPETITION CÔTE D'IVOIRE

Jun 2014

WATER INNOVATION CHALLENGE

Sep 2014

WORLDSKILLS CHAMPIONS FORUM SUPPORT

Nov 2014

A NEW LOOK AT SKILLS

Dec 2014

THANK-YOU GATHERING

May 2015

SKILLS COMPETITION CÔTE D'IVOIRE

Aug 2015

WORLDSKILLS DIGITAL CHALLENGE

Aug 2015

WORLDSKILLS LISTEN UP! YOUTH HEARING PROTECTION

Aug 2015

A NEW LOOK AT SKILLS

Aug 2015

PROJECT EVALUATION AND RESEARCH

Nov 2015

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WorldSkills  
Digital  
Challenge  
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Skills  
Competition  
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## MODELLING VOCATIONAL EXCELLENCE (MoVE)

With great expectation and excitement, we started out by looking into the core activity of WorldSkills and understanding how skill competitions impact professional development and vocational training.

MoVE was then born by bringing together researchers from Australia, Finland, and United Kingdom to help us answer this big question.

The analysis of results from the surveys conducted with Competitors and Experts during WorldSkills London 2011 resulted in a very important finding: WorldSkills Competitions raise quality, promote professional development, and drive improvements in vocational training.



"I became involved in the MoVE research project at the WorldSkills Competition in 2009. I was in Calgary as a guest of WorldSkills International and attended a seminar presentation by Professor Petri Nokelainen from the University of Tampere, Finland. Petri was working with WorldSkills Finland to test a set of theories about personal characteristics and capability. He surveyed Finnish Competitors in the 2005 and 2007 international Competitions. The research found that the key difference between Gold Medallists and other Competitors was not their technical ability – it was the effort they put into their skill and their motivation that made the difference. This finding challenged a great deal about vocational learning and assessment, which has traditionally focused on technical skill development, with less attention given to cognitive skills and attributes. So when Petri offered his methodology and survey instruments to any researchers in the seminar audience, I was immediately interested in testing the findings with Australian WorldSkills Competitors and in how the research might be applied in my own institution to improve learning and assessment.

In 2010 RMIT and WorldSkills Australia received funding from the Dusseldorp Skills Forum to modify the survey to include questions about the experience of being in the WorldSkills Competition, and apply the research to WSA national Competitors, judges and Experts. The findings about attributes and personal characteristics were almost the same as for the Finnish Competitors in 2005 and 2007. The findings about the WorldSkills experience led us to conclude that involvement in the WorldSkills Competition helped young people to develop a strong sense of professional identity, and was an important platform for lifelong learning for Experts and judges.

MoVE Australia set the scene for a project to survey the Competitors at WorldSkills London 2011. MoVE International was the first project sponsored by WSF. The team involved researchers from the University of Tampere, the SKOPE (Skills, Knowledge and Organizational Performance) Centre at Oxford University and RMIT University.

The MoVE research is important for a number of reasons.

First, it was the first global survey of skilled young people seeking to identify the attributes and capabilities that contribute to skills excellence. Most research on technical and vocational education and training (TVET) has been about the problems faced by TVET systems and teachers. MoVE took a different tack altogether by looking at what happened when young people were encouraged to do their best and challenged to stretch themselves to achieve international skills standards. In this way MoVE International leads the way into a long overdue field of investigation: how to maximise the opportunities for young people to gain expertise pursue excellence in areas of skill and knowledge critical to social and economic wellbeing and global sustainability.

Second, MoVE highlighted the importance of WorldSkills in creating opportunities for young people to be recognised for performing at their best. Such opportunities are rare and poorly promoted, compared to those for young people with sporting ability who have the global benchmark of the Olympics to encourage them, as well as multiple paths to local and national recognition. In the world of skills development WorldSkills is a unique source of professional affirmation for participants.

Third, the research points to the importance of WorldSkills as a networking hub. The seminar at which Petri presented has a very small audience – not surprising given that most people at Stampede Park Calgary were there for the Competition. But numbers proved to be less important than the connections made by those who did participate, and who took up Petri's offer to apply the research. Important in this regard was Jenny Shackleton, then Head of Skills Development at UK Skills. It was Jenny who forged the link with the SKOPE Centre at Oxford, and who subsequently applied the MoVE findings to the development of the WorldSkills Standards and the new WorldSkills assessment framework – work which may well lead to WorldSkills being recognized as the site for implementation of global standards of skills excellence and for these standards to be applied by TVET systems and providers to build the quality of skills development."

**Dr Helen Smith, Senior Research Fellow,  
RMIT University**



## SANITATION STUDIOS

We believe everyone should have basic access to clean water and proper facilities for toileting and washing.

At the start of 2013, we first planted the seed for a series of initiatives focused on water and sanitation. We believe everyone should have basic access to clean water and proper facilities for toileting and washing. This is why we have been persistent in our efforts to help a variety of communities-in-need to access the source of life: water. Since 2013, our teams have supported projects in Nepal, Bangladesh, and South Africa, where our partner – Healthabitat – has implemented a series of Sanitation Studios, which are designed to make small but significant improvements in living conditions. The new design and construction of rainwater diverter systems in Bhattedanda (Nepal), toilet and waste water systems in Dinajpur (Bangladesh), and improved water supply points and drains in Diepsloot (South Africa) have shown encouraging improvement in both quality of life and health conditions in the surrounding communities. Of course, there is more work to be done, but in all locations the endeavour of our Champions and Experts has helped make the first step possible.

Photo: Troy Everett and Daniel Rattigan construct septic tanks in Dinajpur, Bangladesh.



Grant Stewart (left) and IAPMO representative (right) work together in Nepal.

## IT'S LIFE CHANGING!

"I wanted the chance to share my skills with others who are not as fortunate as I am. Before

## ADVENTUROUS, UNFORGETTABLE, AND ENRICHING

"I had been looking for a project of this nature for quite a while. I feel I have accumulated a lot of great skills and knowledge through my experiences in WorldSkills and as a Construction Teacher. I wanted to put it to good use and hopefully have an impact on people and communities in a different way. I also thought this would be good for my personal and professional development to be exposed to a range of new perspectives and challenges. Before the project, my biggest fear was if the project was not successful. Though I had meetings and exchanged a lot of information about the project, there were still many unknowns. There were also a consciousness that the country I was going to could be dangerous, especially around the pre-election periods where political hartal [a form of mass protest strike action] was known to arise.

During the project, there were some extremely challenging moments mainly related to the severe weather which delayed construction and impacted on the work. Towards the end of my trip, I was happy with the work we were able to achieve but wished I could have stayed longer to do more. My concerns about danger were alleviated by the arrangements to travel with another participant and meet up with the locals who looked after us. The best part was working with incredible people who were part of the project – both locals and non-locals. We made friends with many people from the village and learned so much about their culture and way of life. The biggest challenge was coming up with solutions to problems with limited resources available. In a strange way it made you more

I joined these projects, I never had any doubt or hesitation before joining these projects. All the projects I have participated in so far have exceeded my own expectations, and I have met some incredible people along the way. The greatest experience was the last day when the project came together and we were able to reflect on the process. The only part that wasn't so pleasant was the time spent at the airports. The biggest impact from these projects is hard to explain – it becomes part of your life or you become part of it!"

**Grant Stewart, WorldSkills Australia Technical Delegate Assistant, Sanitation Studio Nepal**



Troy Everett (left) and Daniel Rattigan (right) work with local villager (middle).

innovative. The most striking thing was that being exposed to the lifestyle there highlighted just how wasteful modern society has become in more developed locations. I really enjoyed being part of a culture that was so heavily based on agriculture and nothing seemed to go to waste. The other big observation was that they seemed far happier despite having far less available to them, especially the children.

The experience has definitely affected me personally. I often think of some of the experiences over there when I am in my day-to-day life. At work, it has helped to put challenges and issues into perspective. At home my children love to hear the stories which they also learn from too. I didn't realise just how much happened over there until you start relaying it to someone else."

**Troy Everett, WorldSkills Expert (Bricklaying), Australia, Sanitation Studio Bangladesh**

## LIFE CHANGING EXPERIENCE!

"After being contacted by WorldSkills Foundation about joining this project, I sat down with my girlfriend, family, and my employer, and I realized that this was an opportunity I couldn't turn down. The chance to travel and see Bangladesh as well as help people in the same trip had a massive part to play in my decision to go. I did some research on the internet and talked with Grant Stewart who has experience in the project. Grant shared what to look out for such as the poverty in some of these places and how it could emotionally effect you.

*"My best experience on the job was when I was doing the pipework for the soakage pit, I had a local young boy who was 18 years old with me, showing him how to do the work."*

I had only a small bit of hesitation going because it was such a faraway place, and I had a fear that I was going to miss one of my flights and be left somewhere on the other side of the world! I was worried a small bit about what type of job it was going to be, as I was the only plumber travelling out.

During my trip, I found the poverty in Bangladesh where we were staying very hard to take in. You see these things on television, but to witness it first hand was something very new for me. It took me a while once I got home to get used to my way of living again. The hesitation about the travelling all changed to positive once I got to my hotel room in Kuala Lumpur and met up with Troy. We got on instantly as he's a great man. My worries about the job were gone as well when I met Tom and Phoebe who were the engineers on the project - they had it all under control.

My best experience on the job was when I was doing the pipework for the soakage pit, I had a local young boy who was 18 years old with me, showing him how to do the work. He was so grateful and there were plenty of other locals

gathered around watching us. The worst part of the experience would be after we had spent the full day in the humid weather digging our pit for the septic tank, we came back to it the next morning only to find it full of water because the monsoon rain had hit during the night.

From this trip, I learned that we should never take anything for granted, and be happy with what you have because unfortunately the people in the village in Bangladesh have a lot less. However, what makes me glad is that they are all happy. It has made me appreciate what I have in life a lot more than I used to. I was out

there alone a swell, no family and no girlfriend so it makes me appreciate them a lot more too. I really missed them while I was away. I think professionally it has given me a lot more confidence to make big decisions."

**Daniel Rattigan, WorldSkills Champion (Plumbing and Heating), Ireland, Sanitation Studio Bangladesh**

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## MY CAREER HIGH

"I have always been interested in using my skills to help others, and following a project based from the UK, I helped manage the installation of a rain water harvesting system and fresh water well in a remote town in Mozambique. I was keen to get involved at ground level. WorldSkills Foundation approached me to get involved with the Sanitation Studio in South Africa. After a few short discussions with WSF and partners, mainly Healthabitat (HH), I was convinced it was something I needed to be a part of.

The thought of working in a township such as Diepsloot, South Africa was very daunting. With no prior work experience in the area, I was



*“The experience of the WSF partners ensured that those involved were safe and well looked after.”*

nervous - especially not knowing how locals would respond to or accept our help. However, I thought that by working for the two weeks we would create a solution that would solve the crisis they were having. I was far wrong. It became apparent that a single two-week visit couldn't completely solve the crisis in the township - but it was a good way to start.

The hesitation about working in the township disappeared as soon as I met Paul Phleros, the director of HH. The experience of the WSF partners ensured that those involved were safe and well looked after. Typically, these types of project would be very difficult to control, but it was evident in South Africa that the local partners had planned everything to work seamlessly. Being introduced to a solid team on the ground that invited your sharing of knowledge made the acceptance into the community much easier. The WASSUP team made my time in Diepsloot feel safe: I have since been back there, and drank in one of their local bars! So you could say my hesitation was changed by the project.

The worst part of the project for me was identifying that I couldn't make as big a change as I wanted, and the scale of the issue that we faced was beyond what I had imagined. This coincidentally actually stimulated the best part of the project for me, through the new found knowledge and wisdom shared by Paul Phleros who over dinner each evening described how the little involvements early on often go on to create great things. He described how pioneering a project is the most difficult part and often things start to steam role following your success. Paul was right. When I returned to Diepsloot, the plans the ground team had in place and the enthusiasm of the ground team proved that the



Ciaran Coady (centre left) and Shane Trevitt (centre right) work on waste and water facilities with local partner - WASSUP team, villager (middle).

work we completed was worthwhile.

The project as a whole – including my return visit – has made me value things a lot more. I often make people realize how lucky they are for the things they have. I have caught a bug for being involved in work like this. When I finish university next year, I want to get further involved in similar projects.

The experience has made me a better parent, seeing how the people of Diepsloot bring their children up in such a respectful way for which they should be proud of, given their poor unchosen living condition. It makes me value everything my family has. I now find I have an emphasis on making sure my three-year old son appreciates what he has and what others don't - something I took for granted before.

In Diepsloot, seeing how people are so desperate for work – and how appreciative of training they are – made me think about the processes back at work and how to ensure our apprentices remain motivated and passionate about what they do. This is something I am often feeding back into my company to ensure our young talent is the next generation to share knowledge in the way I did.”

**Shane Trevitt, WorldSkills Champion  
(Plumbing and Heating), United Kingdom,  
Sanitation Studio South Africa**



## INNOVATION LABS

This initiative focused on developing state of-the-art Virtual 3D Learning tools for Vocational Education and Training.

When it comes to an innovative idea, it often takes at least two like-minded organizations to turn it into a reality. In 2013, our first Innovation Lab was born through collaboration between WSF and Institute of Technical Education Singapore (ITE). This initiative focused on developing state-of-the-art Virtual 3D Learning tools for vocational education and training. We have facilitated two Innovation Labs – focusing on Floristry and Facilities Management – which have significantly increased the level of engagement for ITE students in these areas. To deliver this work, two pairs of Web Design and Mechanical Engineering Design - CAD Champions were sent on a life-changing three-month placement in Singapore in both 2013 and 2014. Not only were they open to the challenge of developing their skills and understanding of these brand new software platforms, but they also embraced the new culture and the benefits of teamwork. The ripple effect from this project showcase has attracted considerable interest from other educational institutions, as well as visitors to skills competitions.

Photo: Wouter Niekus (left) and Natã Barbosa (centre) test their application in an Icube.

## MIND-BLOWING, CHALLENGING, REWARDING

"I was looking for a new opportunity abroad to enrich my career and extend my Web Design skill. The virtual reality aspect of Innovation Lab 2013 sounded appealing as it involves a new region of my skill: 3D/virtual reality. Websites are getting more interactive and 3D adds another dimension to the possibilities of Web Design.

As WorldSkills Foundation was looking for 3D developers, I was not sure if I would be selected for this project. However as there is no 3D skill at WorldSkills, the closest skills would be Web Design and CAD. I enquired whether a programmer would come in handy for the project and the answer was "Yes".

ITE gave us an opportunity to be creative. We were encouraged to come up with our own concept and ideas to create virtual learning materials for the floristry students. Therefore we could study 3D up to the required level and focus more on the interaction of the application.

The best part was to see our first draft of the project working in a mobile virtual environment – the EON Reality Icube. As the brand new Icube training facility (a 4x4x4 classroom of virtual surrounding screens) was still being setup at ITE, we went to test our project at the EON Reality Singapore Headquarters. At the point of testing our first draft, we were already five weeks into the work. It was quite exciting to see how we were actually doing and what the experience would be like for the Floristry students using our application. The experience exceeded our own expectations. The toughest part was the long hours required to finish our project during the last month. Then again, as we were working with such cool stuff, it was alright.

After this project, I am now even more positive that – as a programmer – I can adapt to any challenges given to me. There is always a way of making an idea work, no matter how challenging it might sound. Having the chance to dedicate ourselves to one specific project (instead of many different projects all at the same time) will definitely result in a better work. Furthermore, we had some challenges with our teamwork, which we dealt with professionally and therefore learned from.

Professionally, I draw from this experience to inform my clients about bigger opportunities

that exist to interact with their visitors both online and offline: so many more creative solutions than just a website. Personally, it has been a great experience to work in a foreign environment. Working abroad always is a faster way of learning which is combined with the fun of being in a new environment including different perspectives."

**Wouter Niekus, WorldSkills Champion (Web Design), Netherlands, Innovation Lab 2013**

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## WE DID IT!

"I like working on things that change the ordinary way of doing something. That project seemed like a big challenge, but the type of initiative that drives change. I like difficult or challenging projects because they teach me so much.

*"As we did the user testing, we realized the importance of what we had created."*

Before the project started, I had a feeling there would be more people working on it. At that time, I could build software and create 2D animations. However, I did not know how to integrate 3D models into software nor did I know how to create 3D animations. For this reason, I initially thought: "OK, I will help with the coding and there will be people there for design and 3D". Honestly, I did not have any hesitations as I consider myself a very adventurous person; I wanted to learn and give it my best work.

Things started to shape up during the first week, as we had the understanding that it would be a team of two – Wouter and I – to work on the project. However, this was also the first time we realized that we had to move even faster: we would be learning, and producing results at the same time. We were lucky to have the team from EON Reality and ITE there to help when we needed assistance. Wouter and I had both taken the challenge because we wanted to learn from the whole experience, so learning a new thing every day was such a bonus.

There were many great moments during this project. The best of all was when we had completed development of our application and went to test it with the students. As we did the user testing, we realized the importance of what we had created. We could see the motivation from the students as they went on exploring what we had worked on for two months. However, I could say that sometimes it was easy to overlook the fact that we were learning, creating a new project, prioritizing work, living in a different country, and working in a new team for a short period of time. We were so focused on making sure that the end goals would be met, that we did not really think about all those things.

It was a life-changing experience for me. When I finished the project, there was so much that had happened in such a short period of time, which allowed me to grow as a professional and have a different view of the world around (and far from) me. I believe this project helped me better understand where I want to be, and what I want to do in the coming years.

Being responsible for the entire process of conceptualization, design, coding, testing, and final presentation was a privilege. This experience allowed me to meet a lot of people from the technology field. Personally, the result of the project was reinforcement that I can and should go after such challenges. I attribute the most memorable and valuable parts of my experience to the people who worked with me: I was lucky to have them around and the synergy was just right."

**Natã Barbosa, WorldSkills Champion (Web Design), Brazil, Innovation Lab 2013**

### AN INNOVATIVE CHALLENGE!

"I decided to join the project after receiving an email several months prior. I was very hesitant at first, but I made the 3.00 a.m. decision based on the opportunity for adventure and an exciting challenge. I had also been looking for ways to give back to an organization that had done so much for me through the WorldSkills Competition.

To be honest, I had no idea what to expect prior to starting the project. This led to a mountain of doubt leading up to the start date. While I was



Michael Christensen from Canada applies for Innovation Lab 2014.

CAD designer by trade, I knew very little about programing, and even less about virtual reality. I was very excited about what I would be learning, but starting without knowing the path to our goal left me feeling pretty nervous. It all worked out in the end.

Like with any new skill, everything became easier as I got hands-on and started playing around. Within a couple weeks, I had overcome the limitations of working with new software, and moved on learning how to tell a story. I had not anticipated how huge the challenge of designing software for educational purposes would be, and this definitely became the focus of our efforts.

My best experiences came with every success, and every step forward in the development process. In a virtual reality system like the Icube, working with a designed environment became so much more than just seeing it on a screen. We could actually explore and interact at a one to one scale as if we had created something real. Unfortunately my worst experience came at the end, when we had to submit an incomplete project – we had missed our due date by a week, and had to make some cuts to functionality.

Looking back, I've learned an incredible amount from my experiences with the Innovation Lab. Working and living in a culture and climate so different from my home left me with a wider view of the world and the people in it. The challenges posed by this project brought me to a near breaking point, and taught me many lessons on organization and management the hard way. My methods of tackling major professional projects has been altered; I now take more time to plan out projects before they start, and learn as much as I can about the processes involved."

**Michael Christensen, WorldSkills Champion (Mechanical Engineering Design - CAD), Canada, Innovation Lab 2014**





Simon Noerdjan from Suriname applies for Innovation Lab 2014.

## CHALLENGING, EXCITING, EDUCATIONAL

"I decided to join because the project seemed like a challenge for me at that point of my career. I could tackle every aspect of web design with ease, because I had already been doing this for roughly 10 years. Although there is always more to learn in web design, the thrill was not as big as before. So when I first heard about the Innovation Lab, I thought it was a real opportunity to discover new technology, new environment, and a completely different culture. However, I was confident that my knowledge in programming, design and other professional skills would help me deliver.

*"The Innovation Lab project has added a unique section to my resume."*

There was also encouragement from Wouter Niekus, a WorldSkills Champion from the Netherlands who was my trainer in web design. He is one of the key people that enabled Suriname to compete at WorldSkills Americas 2010, and happened to be one of the first Champions to join the Innovation Lab in 2013. The second motive for me to join this project was because I wanted to be re-connected with WorldSkills. It was my first contact with WSF, and I'm very happy to have met everybody. It has given me more understanding of how WorldSkills works.

In January 2012, I started a web design company called Bit Dynamics. Before joining the project, I was not sure if I could leave the company for three months and keep the business running at the same time. However, my team was supportive, and also saw this as a positive challenge for themselves to operate without me. I even consulted the other stakeholders of the company before I made my decision, and they urged me to go for it!

After the project, I returned with a whole different view on managing my company. I used to be very close to the production process, knowing every aspect of running projects. Being in Singapore for three months taught me to trust my team fully with their responsibilities. Delegating tasks works better now, and I don't try to take control over every aspect. Instead, I'm more focused on setting goals, evaluating results and guiding the team. I really value the ITE experience because except for the knowledge I gained during the Innovation Lab, I also went through a learning process that reached another level of personal growth.

Showcasing the project during the Singapore International Water Week in Marina Bay Sands Convention Centre was a definite highlight. Seeing people having fun and giving positive feedback about the work that Michael Christensen and I did, with support of EON Reality and ITE, was really rewarding. Knowing that the result of our project is now being used in ITE's courses really gives me a good feeling. Thinking back, I really want to give Michael a high five! We made a really great team: we were one

unit, on a mission. And to top it off, we shared a fair amount of interest like cars, movies and a pint of beer during the weekends, so we turned out to be great buddies. As he would say: "Good times!"

Going through the project, of course there were also some down times. When collecting information and feedback, we pointed out some bugs in the EON software and had to go through the hard way of solving them because there were no documented solutions.

Professionally, the Innovation Lab project has added a unique section to my resume. Clients seem to appreciate you more if you have some experience working from abroad. Personally, the involvement broadens my ambitions in thinking outside of Suriname, in terms of traveling and business. Bigger dreams should definitely lead to bigger achievements in the long run."

**Simon Noerdjan, WorldSkills Americas Champion (Web Design), Suriname, Innovation Lab 2014**



## NATIONAL SKILLS COMPETITION IN CÔTE D'IVOIRE 2014

For a post-war country who used to be the regional hub of vocational education and training, this was a historical milestone.

In 2014, we brought the first official National Skills Competition to West Africa – Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire – by working with United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), The Ministry of Employment, Social Affairs and Vocational Training in Côte d'Ivoire, with further support from WorldSkills France, Skills Belgium, and Skills Canada. For a post-war country that used to be the regional hub of vocational education and training, this was a historical milestone to regain the confidence of the government and inspire young students, nationwide. Starting with only three skills – Welding, Bricklaying, and Carpentry – the first group of 18 students competed nationally for the first time in their lives. The Ministry has built a stronger relationship with WorldSkills France ever since, and is now on their way to host more National Skills Competitions. The dedicated and experienced Experts who supported the first event take this precious memory with them back home.

Photo: Luc Lagneaux (front left) and Maup Ruijsbroek (front right) celebrate with all Competitors at the Closing Ceremony.



Michel van Erkelens (centre right) work with experts during the National Skills Competition in Côte d'Ivoire.

## KNOWLEDGE IS POWER AND TO SHARE IS STRENGTH

"My decision to participate in this project was based on my belief that I wanted to share my knowledge and experience that I have built up in my work in the Netherlands and abroad. The main experience that I have is in the Vocational and Educational Training field at different levels. By sharing my knowledge and experience, I hoped to make skills interesting to others, and to show them how skills opens up pathways to career.

*"People always do their best and support others under all circumstances."*

Over the years, I have several projects implemented in many countries. However, it was my first time to be involved in a project based in Africa. I did not know what to expect, but my experience is that you come across very inspiring individuals and people who want to make something out of their lives everywhere.

During the project, I saw a country still recovering from a civil war. Even in this context I have to say that the experiences I shared with the international team of Experts was all good. They came from Ireland, Spain, Belgium, Netherlands, and France. It was fantastic to have led this international group of people. The most beautiful moments were to see the local students being offered this

great opportunity through training, and we got the chance to organize their first National Skills Competition as a team. Various groups, schools and organizations were highly motivated to participate in Abidjan. The highlight came during the awards ceremony where everyone, including teachers and directors of schools, jumped up and down and danced on the stage as the awards were given out.

My best memory of all is that people always do their best and support others under all circumstances. These people are the students, family, friends, teachers, and directors whom I have met through this project. It always makes me think that we are not so different from each other.

This experience is very special and it only makes me more motivated to share the knowledge and experience that I have with other communities or organizations. To improve the world, it always begins with yourself. This gives me the strength to help others."

**Michel van Erkelens, WorldSkills Expert  
(Wall and Floor Tiling), Netherlands**

## LIFELONG LEARNING

"Patrick Bouvard from France (WorldSkills Expert in Welding) asked me if I could join this project. After that, I was contacted by WSF to organize the first National Skills Competition in Côte d'Ivoire, specifically in the area of Welding.

Before the project, I had expected that I would pass on my knowledge about training sessions and the high level of the WorldSkills Competition to the Ivorian team. I knew that the level of Côte d'Ivoire is not the same

*"We need to help these young people to have better chances of employment, and build a better world."*

as in Europe. But that is why we need to help and encourage them to participate in WorldSkills. I also had a fear of the food, safety, accommodation and possible diseases such as Ebola, but everything in Abidjan went well, thanks to WSF and UNIDO.

When I we arrived in Côte d'Ivoire – although I knew that a national competition required good equipment and we needed to follow the safety rules – they didn't have the same resources as a standard WorldSkills Competition. Everything was organized outside, in open tents, which was not safe. Due to financial constraints, the only Test Project they could provide for the welders was to build a barbecue. However, the positive part of it was that the Competitors were so keen to learn.



Luc Lagneaux (centre left) with the Competitors

We also had a chance to train the trainers in Abidjan, leaving them a much more positive attitude before the Competition started.

What have learned from this project? I want to pass on my experience and skills on to many more teachers in developing countries. We need to help these young people to have better chances of employment, and build a better world. I enjoy being involved in such work, and I hope WSF will continue to offer more opportunities like this one. I'm very proud to be part of it. If you need people for new projects, all you need to do is ask!"

**Luc Lagneaux, WorldSkills Expert (Welding), Belgium**

## CHALLENGING, REWARDING, EMOTIONAL

"When I received the invitation to be involved in the Bricklaying competition I had no hesitation in accepting the role. As I have extensive experience as a National Skills Chief Examiner in Ireland and as a WorldSkills Chief Expert it seemed to me like a great opportunity to share my knowledge and expertise with the young people and their teachers at the first National Skills Competition in Côte d'Ivoire.

Before the project I remained very open minded. About three months before the Competition I received information about the host city (Abidjan) and the venue which helped me to visualize my expectations. The test project was carefully selected in advance to suit the local standards and the time allocated. I had input with the development of this project from an early stage, which was good. I had some reservations about the venue as the Competition was to be held outdoors under canvass. I was worried about the weather and the impact that it might have on the Competition. How level would the building surface prove to be? What about the quality of the materials to be used and the skills standards? And the marking of the projects, would this run smoothly?

*"It was very positive to see how emotionally involved the Competitors and teachers were throughout the National Skills Competition."*

As it turned out the venue proved to be very good. The building surface was better than expected. It rained on the final morning of the last day with little or no impact on the





William Lacey (centre) with the Competitors.

Competition. Although the materials were handmade, the finish and size consistency were good. The marking proved somewhat frantic because of fading light, but we got there.

It was very positive to see how emotionally involved the Competitors and teachers were throughout the Competition and especially so at the excellent awards ceremony.

Regretfully, one incident occurred during the preparation and set up stage of the National Skills Competition. The WSF team office was broken into, and some computers and a passport were stolen. This adversely impacted the preparation time available, but the moral of the team remained high. A great group of people, selected by a brilliant team leader, take a bow Michel.

On reflection, I am delighted to have been given the opportunity by WSF to support the National Skills Competition. I hope that the organizers, Competitors and teachers will have benefitted from my participation. Personally I have really enjoyed meeting such like-minded people. It was a great experience for me and one that I will never forget."

**William Lacey, WorldSkills Expert (Bricklaying), Ireland**

## FUN, EXCITING, CHALLENGING

"Personally, it was a unique experience in a foreign country and a chance to meet the people there. Also, I was honoured to be asked to share my knowledge and experience. Last, but not least, I could bring skill competitions to the Ivorian people.

Admittedly, I did have hesitations about the situation in Côte d'Ivoire. There was already talk

regarding Ebola in West Africa, and I had no idea about the level of training and skills I would find there. However, as I was informed that Michel would be on a scoping trip in Abidjan, and because this was a WSF project, I felt more confident about the overall situation.



Maup Ruijsbroek (front right) with the Competitors and their teachers.

My best experience during this project was to see the eagerness from the local teachers and students to learn despite the language differences (there was an excellent interpreter). I could read from their faces that they understood the instruction and explanation of assessment methods, as well as other safety information.

*"At the end, my understanding of African culture has become richer."*

The only things which would have made the National Skills Competition even more successful were to have higher quality tools and better security in our office.

At the end, my understanding of African culture has become richer."

**Maup Ruijsbroek, WorldSkills Expert (Carpentry), Netherlands**



# WATER INNOVATION CHALLENGE 2014

This innovative format of Challenge was conceived to provide practical solutions for real world implementation.

In a humid Singaporean summer of 2014, young plumbers, engineers, and designers from the United States of America and Australia combined their expertise to design a series of new solutions for water and sanitation problems in remote villages in Nepal and Bangladesh. This innovative format of Challenge was conceived to provide practical solutions for real world implementation, developed by Champions with different skill sets. We hope that these ongoing partnerships with Healthabitat, The International Association of Plumbing and Mechanical Officials (IAPMO), World Plumbing Council, and RMIT University will allow us to continue to build more sustainable collaborations that significantly impact public health in selected countries.

Photo: The Amphitheatre which is located in the centre of ITE campus serve as the perfect venue for the Water Innovation Challenge.

## AMAZING, STRESSFUL, BEAUTIFUL

"I like to challenge myself and push my boundaries. Taking a trip across the world to work in a brand new field was definitely out of my comfort zone. At the same time, I was excited about the challenges and the likely rich project outcomes.

*"Each person I met while abroad just opened my mind and allowed me to build my communication skills."*

I have never worked in the engineering or plumbing fields before. Generally I work in design and advertising so I doubted my ability to understand what my teammates needed me to do. I wanted to be able to keep up and not disappoint anyone. But I was surprised at how much collaboration went into the projects and material. We would not have been as successful without each working component of our team, myself included. I was able to sketch formats and structure documents as quickly as possible, which really helped my teammates work efficiently.

The whole experience was incredible. I was able to collaborate and network with so many people from different parts of the world. Each person I met while abroad just opened my mind and allowed me to build my communication skills. I learned so much from so many people, and I am so thankful for that. The hardest part, honestly, was the humidity! It was like being a fish in an aquarium. But project-wise I couldn't say there was a bad experience because every mistake just leads to a lesson learned; I'm someone who believes those lessons are very valuable.

I have learned and gained so much knowledge from my teammates, the other participants and the leaders. I was able to see a real life example of collaborative teamwork (from completely different spectrums of careers) come together

and create an amazing outcome. I met amazing people, made amazing connections and relationships and it's something I'll never forget.

Besides just having a great story to tell new people that I meet, I am able to use the stories from this Challenge when speaking to future employers. I was able to go abroad and do what I love, that puts me above the rest of my peers as far as job applications are concerned. Employers see that I have an experience under my belt that most 22-year olds do not."

**Sarah Parker, WorldSkills Champion (Graphic Design), United States of America**



Judy Torres (left) and Sarah Parker (right) are the female representatives of talented young people in Team USA.

## AMAZING, LIFE-CHANGING, AWESOME

"I saw the announcement in the American Society of Plumbing Engineers (ASPE) Young Professionals newsletter and thought to myself "this seems interesting". I saw it as an opportunity where my skills could be utilized to benefit others. The Water Innovation Challenge targeted specific issues of poor sanitation and water conservation, which was something directly associated with my field and also a subject I feel passionate about. Though it was a subject I had limited knowledge of, I'm always up for a challenge to learn something new.

From the start, I was excited to submit my application but didn't think I would actually get a position on the team. Once we received information on the project, it looked like a lot of work, and I was unsure about the expectations.

I decided to treat it just like a project I would do at work, and tried to put in as much as possible. There were not many details provided about the practical tasks, which made me very nervous. My thought was that I should do as much research as I could, and take as many resources and tools with me that could be useful during the Challenge.

Once we arrived, we received more information which gave me better understanding of what was expected. What really lifted my doubts and hesitation was my team. Particularly after the first day, we all really learned our strengths and how to utilize them efficiently. Project management was the key and working together as a unified team is what helped us move ahead.

The toughest part of my experience was the second day onsite: I was sick, exhausted and sleep deprived from staying up the night before working on the project. Fortunately, I was surrounded by amazing people that found a way to get me the Singapore version of chicken noodle soup! This helped me feel a lot better, just in time for the pump challenge. The best experience was the final day, during our presentations to the judges. My nerves were through the roof. We were as prepared as we could be which I think it showed. I remember being up there, and our team flowed through our presentation in such a way that it seemed like we had worked together for years. I remember I skipped over a point, and one of my team members swept in, very casually, to state it!

Overall, it was a life-changing experience. It made me more conscious of world issues and showed me that there is a place where my skills and knowledge can help make a difference. I met and worked with people from different cultures, helping me become a better-rounded person. I gained experience leading a team and managing a project: skills beneficial to my career and personal growth.

I feel like it reaffirmed me, and gave me a boost of confidence both personally and professionally. Winning the Challenge opened new doors for me. Many people in the industry became aware and our achievement didn't go unnoticed. There was light shined on the important issue of poor sanitation and water quality millions of people face every day. ASPE recognized me with an award for scientific achievement, and I gave further newspaper, radio and television interviews, growing my professional network.

There was attention brought to the important issue of poor sanitation and water quality millions of people face every day. Personally, I would like to continue to look for ways I can use my skills and time to help find a solution to this matter."

**Judy Torres, Graduate Mechanical Engineer,  
United States of America**

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### **COMPELLING, EXCEPTIONAL, UNFORGETTABLE**

"I decided to join the Water Innovation Challenge because I knew it would be a great opportunity to work on a project that matters with like-minded people. I was not only keen on putting my theoretical knowledge to use, but I was also excited to learn new skill and help people out while doing so. Before the project commenced, I was dubious about what I could bring to the table in terms of ideas for the project but sure enough, everyone was on the same page. I was placed on the management side of the project and everyone's involvement made the journey really fun. I wasn't expecting to put together a hand pump system either when we got to Singapore, but I speak for the team when I say we certainly learnt something new every day there! Especially during the days leading up to the presentation! There were mishaps, pressure, last minute decisions, but we survived. This was undoubtedly due to the fact that although we knew we were stepping into unfamiliar grounds, we still went for it and made it out as a team.

*"Anytime a door opens  
for you, go for it."*

The team meetings really helped us come up with a plan and not long after the first meet, we had the ball rolling. The entire experience, from brainstorming to organizing to flying over to Singapore and experiencing the city and the tremendous enthusiasm everyone who was working on the project, including my own team, was amazing!

There was probably one moment I recall not enjoying: my laptop decided to play up which set the team back for time. Fortunately, we were able to borrow a laptop from ITE. We didn't come first, but I believe we took away something more important than winning, a team



that is able to make decisions on the spot, not lose their cool and stay optimistic when things change, effectively communicate their thoughts, provide constructive criticism and best of all, have a great sense of sportsmanship.

Although there was that one mishap during the competition, it taught me something important that I like to apply both in personal and professional life: staying calm and asking for help when you need it goes a long way! And having a reliable antivirus is good investment!

I don't at all regret putting my hand up to participate in the Challenge. A lot of the time, I'd wait a bit to think about doing things like this but had I waited any longer, the opportunity would have slipped right by me. What I'm trying to get at is that there will be times where opportunities like this will fall into your hands and times where you'll have to prove that you deserve them. Either way, never believe you're not good enough or say that you'll do it later. Anytime a door opens for you, go for it. Believe in yourself. This is your time. There is always so much to learn and accomplish, and if you only give yourself the opportunity to find out, you would surprise yourself and achieve things you never expected."

**Nurul Driver, Bachelor of Engineering (RMIT University), Australia**

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## I MISS WORLDSKILLS

"The whole adventure began with an email that popped up in my student account, which invited engineering students to apply to be part of the Water Innovation Challenge. Studying Environmental Engineering, it immediately grabbed my attention. To be honest I didn't take a minute to respond to the e-mail, and while I was eagerly waiting for a response, I was contemplating the possible opportunities such as professional development skills application, networking and how this could give me the edge in a competitive job market.

It's not often you get opportunities as students to represent your country and your academic institution on an international stage. Not to mention, to work on something that was really relevant to my studies and also very personal to me. I was very excited, and I had no idea what to expect. As an engineer, I had no previous experience of working alongside plumbers. My

initial understanding was that the engineers had to complete a report before arriving to Singapore, and the plumbers then had to work it out with the hand pumps. It was a shock to me when I heard we had to also develop installation and operational manuals while the plumbers were assembling all the parts. I had never experienced such an intense environment in my experiences so far!



Babbar Ali Suleman (left) and Nurul Driver (right) are the two engineers in Team Australia.

The intensity of the three-day Challenge has its lows as well as highs. I was really disappointed on our scores from the first day. All of us as a group began to complain and pinpoint faults, which I suppose is the usual dynamics. But to add to that, I had many highs as we got back very strong on the second day as a team. The best part was when the mentor of the US team – William Erickson – came over and told me: "You sold the project to me". There were also lots of other compliments from many others on the delivery of our final proposal to the judges and public audience.

My take-away from the event was that sanitation in developing world is a problem, and a challenge for which we have only managed to scratch the surface. Some of the team will actually go to Bangladesh or Nepal and build the solutions that the WIC has envisioned. I personally believe that the project has transformed me into a mature individual, and made me recognize that what matters is skills development and evolving innovation."

**Babbar Ali Suleman, Bachelor of Environmental Engineering (RMIT University), Australia**



## SUPPORTING WORLDSKILLS CHAMPIONS FORUM 2014

The Champions Trust is seen as a new platform for promoting future Champion engagement and communication beyond the Competition.

After that once-in-a-life-time experience of WorldSkills Competition, many Champions are eager to stay involved and be part of the WorldSkills movement. To facilitate new ways to reach this goal, WSF pledged support for the development of a final project idea to be proposed by the WorldSkills Champions Forum 2014. Subsequently, the "WorldSkills Champions Trust" was recommended, and has been further developed by this team of Champions. The Champions Trust is seen as a new platform for promoting future Champion engagement and communication beyond the Competition.

Photo: WorldSkills Champions Forum present their project ideas at the General Assembly 2014.

## EVERYTHING WAS EXCELLENT!

"WorldSkills France approached me about joining the WorldSkills Champions Forum 2014 (WSCF2014), which I really didn't expect. It was a real surprise and I immediately accepted to be part of it. What motivated me the most was to be part of WorldSkills again.

I expected to learn what the previous Champions Forums and what we can do to continue or improve the event. I had some doubts before my trip because of my English level because I don't consider myself as a good speaker. On the other hand, it was also an opportunity to practice my English.

At the WSCF2014, I was really happy about what the group achieved. All of our ideas were not new to the previous Champions Forums, but we were encouraged to think of ways that would help the ideas to be realized. My worries about my English level disappeared when we started exchanging and sharing ideas, especially as so many of the other Champions were also not English native speakers. My best experience was meeting other Champions, working together, making pizza, and sharing a really good moment despite all different cultures. My toughest moment was presenting in English to 250 General Assembly delegates! But in the end, this was a really great memory.

Like I said, it was a unique opportunity and an incredible moment for me. I don't know many events that allow you to meet people from around the world who are all so passionate about their skills and have the same goal.

Taking part in WSCF has given me a chance to be part of WorldSkills beyond the national level. It's an honour for me to be part of the pilot group for the WorldSkills Champions Trust. It motivates me to do something right and be durable, because the result of the project depends on us.

The boat can't go ahead if it does not have enough people to row it, and we have to cross a big ocean. As the pilot group we have to row this boat by leading it to the right direction and supporting all other Champions who will be part of it."

**Victor Simon, WorldSkills Champion (Manufacturing Team Challenge), France**

## THE BOND BECAME VERY STRONG

"For the WSCF2014, an email went out to all Champions and alumni members in the UK. Two people replied, but unfortunately one couldn't attend the dates so I was contacted to ask if I could join. I accepted the offer of attending as I thought it would be a great experience to stay in touch with the other Champions and express my views as well.

*"We have to row this boat by leading it to the right direction."*

I was completely unaware of what to expect over the six days. I was slightly dubious of what would happen and whom would attend. But as soon as I met the other Champions, I relaxed a lot more as we were quickly informed of how the next several days would plan out. I think the best experience was the Champions presenting to the entire General Assembly where I think we made a huge impact. I also think one of the best moments were when all Champions and leaders were together, the bond we all made over this period became really strong. I would say a harder time was when we were up working until 1.00 a.m., finishing our presentation while emotions were running high! We were all so determined to finish our work and deliver it in style to the General Assembly the following day.

I am still involved in developing the Champions Trust idea that has emerged from the Champions Forum. Being involved in this project does not affect my work nor social life, as each individual applies as much time as it suits them. But I would say your confidence and knowledge widens. It is amazing that I have been given this opportunity to develop the project idea. I feel privileged to be chosen and hopefully help all Champions develop after the Competition. I would say not only do you take away friendships and memories but you also develop so much as a person."

**Katie Wright, WorldSkills Champion (Beauty Therapy), United Kingdom**

## AN INSPIRING LEARNING PROCESS

"After the Champions Forum, there was an opening for a small group of Champions to develop an action plan for the chosen idea – WorldSkills Champions Trust – so I applied for it. We were given a set of questionnaires, and after much evaluation from WorldSkills, I was chosen to be a part of this pilot programme.

The WorldSkills Competition has created so many Champions down the years. It would be a waste if they were only involved during this once-a-lifetime experience. Therefore I want to be involved in this pilot project to reduce the gap between Champions and WorldSkills. We can tap their valuable skills and knowledge, expand the WorldSkills family, and together give back to the community. At the same time, we can promote the presence of WorldSkills to the world as an organization that actively promotes Vocational Education. Last but not least, I would not miss this chance to meet great people along the way!



WorldSkills Champions (from left) - Sufyan Zainalabidin, Katie Wright, Lucq Post, Ricardo Vivian, Victor Simon, and Abdulla Shehhi - join a WSF sponsored workshop in Birmingham as the pilot group of WorldSkills Champions Trust.

Before the start of this initiative, I was uncertain as to how the six of us Champions could make a significant difference. The truth is, all of us came from different backgrounds, and none of which is to develop a new programme within WorldSkills. On the other hand, due to my uncertainty, I threw in as many ideas as I could, and tried to be open-minded to suggestions from my peer Champions during our first meet-up. With the supervision and assistance from WorldSkills, the whole brainstorming process was very smooth and enriching.

I guess the best experience occurred during one of the tea breaks at the workshop, where

we were still busy discussing the details of the action plan, when a hit song from the 90s came up, everyone started dancing and laughing!

It is a combination of both honour and pressure being in the first pilot group. Firstly, it is a great pleasure working together with this creative team, ironing out ideas, plus learning from each other, all with a single aim of connecting Champions and WorldSkills after competitions. On the other hand, there is also a constant pressure to ensure that the foundation we as the first pilot group lay out is critical for future WSC candidates, Champions and WorldSkills.

It has been an inspiring learning process for me while working with the whole team, as I get to experience the different point-of-views raised up by each Champion. Working with a team of like-minded and fun people who want to create a difference in WorldSkills and Vocational Education made the whole process so much enjoyable, plus elevating. You learn so much from each Champion and each coordinator, when they share their life experiences, cultures and their vision of WorldSkills. It feels like a family – a WorldSkills Family.

It has also taught me to think critically and thoroughly over action plans for the WorldSkills Champions Trust, ensuring that it will be beneficial for Champions, as well as WorldSkills and Global Partners. On a personal level, I am grateful to be given this chance to learn and have a better understanding of the different cultures of the world."

**Sufyan Zainalabidin, WorldSkills Champion  
(Mechanical Engineering Design - CAD),  
Singapore**

## AN INSPIRING LEARNING PROCESS

"I was approached by Emirates Skills to join the Champions Forum. The reason why I decided to participate was because I enjoy socializing with Champions from around the world, sharing ideas about performing WorldSkills related tasks effectively, and how we can apply the experience in our own National Skills Competition.

Before the Champions Forum, I thought I would be nervous in front of the other Champions and delegates. But the Champions Forum was surprisingly very well organized, useful, fun and productive. We had a warm welcome from the organizers and good briefing about the event plan.

This raised my self-confidence and released all the stress I had. This also helped me in overcome the fear of presenting in front of a large group.

It was a new experience for me to meet people from all around the world and I learned some of their culture and how to deal with them. I improved my planning skills and time management. The best experience I gained is to represent my country in front of all the Member countries. When it was time to go home, I was sad to leave after I had such memorable time with these friendly and valuable people.

From this experience, I have become more productive during task performance. I have started to analyse the job I do and try to see the best part from each thing I do. It's a great honour to be part of the pilot group. I think we have very heavy load to take and carry it to the right way. But we are doing our best and everyone will see the amazing result during WorldSkills Sao Paulo 2015."

**Abdulla Shehhi, WorldSkills Champion  
(Aircraft Maintenance), United Arab  
Emirates**

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## WORKING WITH THEM WAS AMAZING

"I was invited by one of the Team Leaders from Brazil to join the Champions Forum. After my good performance at the WorldSkills Competition in Leipzig, they believed I would be a good representative for Brazil. All the experiences that I have had with WorldSkills were amazing and very rewarding. Therefore I got really excited with the invitation. When you are involved with a WorldSkills project and event, you can be sure that you will have a great time working with cool, interesting, and skilled people from all around the world. I think that was one of the things which motivated me the most.

Actually, I was in doubt about everything because I had no idea what would happen at the Champions Forum. But as all my experiences with WorldSkills have been great, I had huge expectations for this event too – being involved in the activities and work with great people. As it turned out, it was much better than what I had expected. When I arrived in Lucerne and started working with all the Champions, I became even more excited. Working with them was amazing. All the meetings, activities, brainstorming and debates made me feel so

grateful for having that opportunity. It doesn't happen every day that Champions from different places get to work together on something big and for an organization such as WorldSkills.

*"Working on  
international projects  
is a great thing for  
anyone's career."*

The most remarkable experience was definitely giving a speech in English. It was the first time I gave a speech in a different language and it happened at a very important event: the WorldSkills General Assembly. I was a bit nervous before because there were so many people and all of them were an important part of WorldSkills. Happily, everything went well and those moments on the stage helped me to grow and to be fearless.

What I have found from this experience is that people think in different ways. Everything you do makes you the person you are. So, when young and high-level professionals from different skill areas and different countries get together, you may have lots of different visions. That doesn't mean these visions oppose themselves. A lot of times they can complement each other, generating new ideas and solutions.

Working on international projects is already a great thing for anyone's career. If the project involves top professionals and an important organization like WorldSkills, it's even better. Another great thing about my involvement is the new and terrific network. I met many nice people and made new friends. Overall, this was very important and rewarding for me. Being a part of this group is a great feeling and a sense of a big responsibility - to help engage Champions around the world. In addition, being part of a WorldSkills project makes me want to give my best. It's just like training for the Competition; it's more than exciting - I just feel so happy."

**Ricardo Vivian, WorldSkills Champion  
(Graphic Design), Brazil**





## A NEW LOOK AT SKILLS 2014

At skills competitions this can mean a much better visitor experience for those who want to understand more.

3D technology has been widely used as a base to create innovation in many areas of our lives. At skill competitions this can mean a much better visitor experience for those who want to understand more.

By working with UK Autodesk Student Experts, we introduced a pioneering series of 3D demonstrations to explain six competition areas at The Skills Show 2014: Bricklaying, Cabinetmaking, Carpentry, CNC Machining, Mechanical Engineering Design, and Stonemasonry. The vision of these young Champions has driven this initiative to a global level, and an even bigger and better New Look At Skills project will be a key part of the visitor experience at WorldSkills São Paulo 2015.

Photo: Andrew Beel (left) work as one of the Autodesk Student Experts to create 3D demonstrations for Test Projects of selected skill competitions at the Skills Show 2014 in Birmingham.

## INSPIRATIONAL, MEANINGFUL AND EDUCATIONAL

"I decided to join when I first learned about this WSF project, as it presented an opportunity to increase my skill level and be able to inspire others.

I had high expectations - as I do with all WorldSkills events and projects. I was not disappointed; throughout the whole project I was inspired to achieve high standards and continue to push forward.

*"I gained greater understanding of different industries."*

One of the best things was to meet new people with different backgrounds and experiences and being able to increase your own knowledge by speaking with others. I gained greater understanding of different industries, and how what I do contributes to how they work.

My involvement has increased my knowledge substantially. It allows me to use what I have learned back in work and home."

**Andrew Beel, WorldSkills Champion  
(Mechanical Engineering Design - CAD),  
United Kingdom**

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## INSPIRATIONAL, MEANINGFUL AND EDUCATIONAL

"I competed in Mechanical Engineering Design - CAD at WorldSkills Shizuoka 2007. After I competed and could see what the software could do for me in the industry, it was always a bit of a dream to work for Autodesk. I guess it's the same as how a lot of young coders and computer science people want to work for Google, for me it was always Autodesk - it was that unattainable company. I became an Autodesk employee two months ago, and it's like a little boy's dream that's really come true!

I absolutely love it at Autodesk, and the good thing is that I can then work with the WorldSkills Foundation on projects like this, as part of my day



Mike Westlake (left) work with Autodesk Student Experts at the Skills Show 2014 to showcase A New Look At Skills for the first time and Autodesk 3D printers.

job, which is fantastic because it means I get to do two of the things I love in my day-to-day work.

The partnership between Autodesk and WorldSkills Foundation has been really great. This project was set up in a very short period of time, and I think we have got a really good output.

*"I became an Autodesk employee two months ago, and it's like a little boy's dream that's really come true!"*

The other thing is, I have had a lot of people coming up to me from different industries saying, "I didn't even think of using 3D software in my Bricklaying course - but how do I do it? Can you teach me, or give me the software?" This has been a really great way to show how we are involved in many industries already, and to learn how we can help even more."

**Mike Westlake, UK Education Manager,  
Autodesk**



Being able to understand how the Foundation works and to network with the Experts was very beneficial.

The overall experience has been amazing!

The sharing of experiences and ideas is much faster when you have a direct personal contact like this.

I enjoyed meeting other people from the Foundation, understanding and analysing the projects as well as getting to know how to proceed.

Good job! Keep this going!

Keep this kind of Gathering going - very cool to meet with each other!

## THANK-YOU GATHERING 2014

In addition to our partners, nothing would have been successful if it wasn't for the dedicated participants who volunteered in our projects.

Our first Thank-You Gathering was held at the end of 2014 in Madrid, in the same rooms as WSF was signed into being, only three years ago. In the workshop, WSF learned so much from the inspiring stories of all present, sharing more among the group about their project experiences.

Though the group was small, the level of engagement and lessons learned among the participants was rewarding – even more for us as WSF.

Photo: From left. Tjerk Dusseldrop (taking the photo), Lucq Post, Michel van Erkelens, Nuria Portland, Seán Kearney, Wouter Niekus, Grae Lung, Victor Simon, and Jack Wilkes.



# STORIES CONTINUE...

## 2015 projects

WORLD SKILLS  
DIGITAL CHALLENGE

NATIONAL SKILLS WORLD SKILLS  
COMPETITION CÔTE LISTEN UP!  
D'IVOIRE 2015 YOUTH HEARING

A NEW LOOK PROTECTION  
AT SKILLS 2015 COMMUNITY  
PLUMBING

WSF PROJECT CHALLENGE  
EVALUATION AND  
RESEARCH

## THANK YOU ALL FOR MAKING HISTORY WITH US...

Autodesk  
EON Reality  
Find a Future / UK Skills Show  
Healthabitat  
International Association of Plumbing and  
Mechanical Officials (IAPMO)  
Institute of Technical Education Singapore  
(ITE)  
Ministry of Employment, Social Affairs and  
Vocational Training, Côte d'Ivoire  
RMIT University  
School of Science and Technology, Singa-  
pore  
Skills USA  
United Nations Industrial Development  
Organization (UNIDO)  
World Plumbing Council  
WorldSkills Australia  
WorldSkills France  
WorldSkills Germany  
WorldSkills Singapore  
WorldSkills UK

## THANK YOU TO OUR CHAMPIONS, EXPERTS AND PARTICIPANTS

Abdulla Shehhi, United Arab Emirates  
Adia Gossan, Ivory Coast  
Adjoumani Atta, Ivory Coast  
Adoh Arsène Money, Ivory Coast  
Alan Gwee, Singapore  
Ali Suleman, Australia  
Andrew Beel, United Kingdom  
Andrew Craig, United Kingdom  
Andrew Pengelly, United Kingdom  
Andrew Pye, United Kingdom  
Andy Murfitt, United Kingdom  
Ang Zhiyong, Singapore

Anne-Marie van der Beek, Germany  
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Béma Kone, Ivory Coast  
Bianca Cravenna, Austria  
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Bruce Poh, Singapore  
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Chris Ridgeon, United Kingdom  
Chris Wilkes, United Kingdom  
Christian Notley, United Kingdom  
Ciaran Coady, Ireland  
Daniel Rattigan, Ireland  
Dave Ambler, United Kingdom  
David Duddy, Australia  
David Gowrie, United Kingdom  
Doris Hribernigg, Ivory Coast  
Douglas Nelson, United States of America  
Dylan van Belkum, United Kingdom  
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Eugene Incerti, United Kingdom  
Gerald Reyes, Austria  
Geoff Ball, Australia  
Grant Stewart, Australia  
Helen Smith, Australia  
Hubert Romer, Germany  
Hui Ling Lim, Singapore  
Ibrahima Kone, Ivory Coast  
Iris Seet, Singapore  
Jack Wilkes, United Kingdom  
Jean Baptiste Djedji, Ivory Coast  
Jean-Claude Zobo, Ivory Coast  
Jeffery Koh, Singapore  
Jon Mellor, United Kingdom  
Jon Rabbett, United Kingdom  
Jonnah Jones, United Kingdom  
Joyce Goh, Singapore  
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Katie Wright, United Kingdom  
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Kenneth Barrientos, Germany  
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Khanna Aneesha, Singapore  
Koffie Fofié, Ivory Coast  
Kouakou Anzoumana, Ivory Coast  
Kouakou Be, Ivory Coast

Kouamé Victor Kouassi, Ivory Coast  
Lago Valentin Gonkadie, Ivory Coast  
Laurence Gates, France  
Lee Firth, United Kingdom  
Lim Teck Lee, Singapore  
Lhu Wen Kai, Singapore  
Loo Zhong Han, Singapore  
Luc Lagneaux, Belgium  
Lucq Post, The Netherlands  
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Marcin Kasica, United Kingdom  
Marcus Kind, Germany  
Marlen Bakalli, Austria  
Mark Callaghan, Australia  
Mark Smallman, United Kingdom  
Martin James, United Kingdom  
Matt Ryan, Australia  
Matthew Bell, United Kingdom  
Matthew Applegarth, United Kingdom  
Maup Ruijsbroek, The Netherlands  
Michael Christensen, Canada  
Michel van Erkelens, The Netherlands  
Mikael Sörensson, United Kingdom  
Mike Westlake, United Kingdom  
Natã Barbosa, Brazil  
Nicholas Michalenko, United States of America  
Nurul Driver, Australia  
Pafani Thomas Coulibaly, Ivory Coast  
Pat Phillips, United Kingdom  
Patricia Ng, Singapore  
Paul Dodds, United Kingdom  
Paul Pholeros, Australia  
Ricardo Vivian, Brazil  
Richard Lelievre, Austria  
Richard Miles, United Kingdom  
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Sean Mundy, Australia  
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Wayne Ellerton, Australia  
Wei Ping Boo, Singapore  
William Erickson, United States of America  
William Lacey, Ireland  
Wouter Niekus, The Netherlands  
Xavier Ng Shan Hao, Singapore





# TO BE CONTINUED...

