

IRWIN HANSON Presents Lakes Region Community College Student with the Ultimate NASCAR Race Experience

2011 SkillsUSA National Automotive Service Technology Champion Wins Behind-the-Scenes Look into NASCAR Sprint Cup Series Racing at the IRWIN Tools Night Race

SAN LUIS OBISPO, Calif., JUNE 30, 2011 — San Luis Obispo High School's Michael Mullen proved he was the top automotive technician last week in Kansas City after he became the national first-place winner of the 2011 SkillsUSA Automotive Service Technology competition. As the winner, he also claimed the IRWIN® HANSON® Ultimate Experience – an once-in-a-lifetime chance to work with legendary NASCAR crew chief, Jeff Hammond, as well as a NASCAR pit crew August 25-28 during the 2011 IRWIN Tools Night Race weekend at Bristol Motor Speedway.

The Ultimate Experience, courtesy of IRWIN Tools, Earnhardt Ganassi Racing with Felix Sabates, and Jeff Hammond, is an opportunity for the high school and post-secondary first place winners of the SkillsUSA Automotive Service Technology competition to go behind-the-scenes and work alongside the NASCAR Sprint Cup Series No. 1 team's pit crew. As the IRWIN HANSON Ultimate Experience winner, Mullen will also participate in a "lunch and learn" opportunity with one of NASCAR's "winningest" crew chiefs, Jeff Hammond, and receive race day exclusives such as an official pace car ride-along experience and the chance to watch the IRWIN Tools Night Race from the No. 1 Earnhardt Ganassi Pit Box.

"We are really excited to host the Ultimate Experience with IRWIN Tools," said Jeff Hammond, Fox Sports Analyst and one of NASCAR's all-time greatest crew chiefs. "This is a great opportunity for us to introduce some young folks, who are just starting out in their careers, to the exciting world of stock car mechanics. It's a career choice that many Automotive Technicians dream of, but aren't quite sure how to make happen."

"The access to the teams, drivers and pit crews in NASCAR is very unique, especially in comparison to other professional sports," adds Ross Porter, President of IRWIN Tools. "We are thrilled to be able to offer this racing experience, with Earnhardt Ganassi Racing and Jeff Hammond, to future Automotive Technicians through SkillsUSA. Hammond is a wonderful ambassador for the IRWIN brand and a role model for young professionals beginning their careers."

IRWIN Tools proudly supports SkillsUSA, a national career and technical education organization that serves more than 300,000 high school and college students in technical, skill and service occupations. SkillsUSA training programs are critical to developing the next generation of leaders and highly qualified professionals in the workforce. IRWIN HANSON ensures that automotive service technology students have the innovative and dependable tools to learn their trade for their future life's work.

#

About IRWIN Tools

IRWIN Tools manufactures and distributes a broad line of hand tools and power tool accessories including VISE-GRIP® pliers and wrenches, MARATHON® saw blades, QUICK-GRIP® clamping tools, SPEEDBOR® wood drilling bits, STRAIT-LINE® marking tools, UNIBIT® step drill bits, and HANSON® taps and dies. IRWIN Tools is a part of Newell Rubbermaid's global portfolio of brands. For more information, call 1-800-GO-IRWIN or visit www.irwin.com. IRWIN invites the nation to celebrate **National Tradesmen Day**, on **Friday, Sept. 16, 2011**.

About Ganassi Racing

In November 2008, two of auto racing's biggest names – Earnhardt and Ganassi – launched a multi-car race team through the combination of the motorsports operations Dale Earnhardt, Inc. and Chip Ganassi Racing with Felix Sabates. The two organizations were then formed into the new Earnhardt Ganassi Racing with Felix Sabates. 2010 was EGR's most prominent season to date. The season started off with a bang as Jamie McMurray returned to EGR and delivered the organization's first win in the Daytona 500. McMurray backed up his 500 win with a victory in the Brickyard 400, making owner Chip Ganassi the only owner to win both the Indy 500 and the Brickyard 400 in the same year. Montoya then found his way to the win column with a victory at Watkins Glen in August, and McMurray returned to victory lane for the third time at Charlotte in mid-October. Overall, the 2010 season was one of Chip Ganassi's and EGR's most successful seasons in NASCAR, with four wins, 15 top-fives, 26 top-tens, and seven poles.

About Jeff Hammond

Jeff Hammond joined Fox Sports at the end of the 2000 Winston Cup season. He and partner Chris Myers host the weekly pre-race show from the famed "Hollywood Hotel" usually located near Victory Lane at each race track. Jeff contributes to the race coverage on Fox and FX with booth announcers, Mike Joy, Larry McReynolds and Darrell Waltrip. Jeff can also be seen every Friday night at 7:00 P.M. EST on Trackside Live on the SPEED Channel. Jeff's career in NASCAR began in 1974 working as a tire changer for Walter Ballard. Becoming one of the best jackmen in the business, Hammond served on all three of driver Cale Yarborough's Winston Cup championship seasons. Legendary driver Darrell Waltrip took over for Yarborough in 1981 and the Junior Johnson-owned team won yet another championship. At the encouragement of Waltrip, Johnson promoted Jeff to the crew chief position for the start of the 1982 season, and as the old saying goes, "The Rest Is History". The combination of owner Johnson, driver Waltrip and crew chief Hammond set the sport of NASCAR on its way. Two more championships followed

Owner Johnson, driver Waltrip and crew chief Hammond set the sport of NASCAR on its ear. Two more championships followed and 43 wins as a crew chief placed Hammond in the record books as one of NASCAR's all time greatest crew chiefs.

About SkillsUSA

SkillsUSA® is a partnership of students, instructors and industry working together to ensure America has a skilled workforce. SkillsUSA helps each student excel. The nationwide organization serves more than 300,000 high school, college and postsecondary students—and their instructors—in training programs in technical, skilled, and service occupations, including health occupations. Over 10.5 million people have been members of SkillsUSA since its founding as The Vocational Industrial Clubs of America in 1965. SkillsUSA instructional programs teach leadership, citizenship and character development to complement technical skill training. Visit: www.skillsusa.org.

<https://irwin.mediaroom.com/2011-06-30-IRWIN-HANSON-Presents-Lakes-Region-Community-College-Student-with-the-Ultimate-NASCAR-Race-Experience>