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American Welding Society Student Member Ranks 7th Best Welder in the World at WorldSkills Competition

****American Welding Champion Chance Pollo Takes Home Best of Nation Award for Team USA****

Miami, FL, January 10, 2008 – America’s welding champion, Chance Pollo, ranked 7th best welder in the world at the 39th WorldSkills competition on November 14-21, 2007, in Shizouka, Japan. Pollo, an [American Welding Society](#) (AWS) student member, went head-to-head with 26 other countries as the USA representative for welding at WorldSkills Japan, the world’s most distinguished student welding competition.

Scoring 521 points out of a possible 600 – only 15 points shy of the top score – Pollo was honored with a Medallion of Excellence, an award given to competitors who score 500 points or more. Top competitors Canada, Korea and Japan, which scored 536, 535, and 534 points, respectively, took home gold medals. Silver and bronze medals were not awarded this year. In addition, Pollo was honored with a Best of Nation award for Team USA, a highly coveted award given to the highest-ranked performer on a team. Team USA was made up of six members, each of whom competed and was ranked in a particular skill area, such as auto body repair, hairdressing, car paint, refrigeration, and plumbing.

The WorldSkills welding competition tests the competitor’s ability to construct sheet metal projects in both aluminum and stainless steel, and to test weldments created in steel plate, pipe and a simulated pressure vessel. Welds are judged based on appearance and soundness by a series of nondestructive and destructive testing methods.

“We are very proud of Chance’s accomplishments at WorldSkills Japan,” said Ed Bohnart, chairman of the American Welding Society Skills Competition Committee, which helps to manage and raise funds for the several Skills contests that lead up to the international competition. “Chance has battled through two years of very difficult local, regional and national competitions, such as the Ireland International Welding Contest in March 2007 in which he won first-place. All of his hard work paid off when he earned his title as the championship student welder for the USA at World Skills Japan. Chance is a prime example of a student with the talent and patience necessary to be a champion welder and we are proud to have him represent the USA.”

Over the next four years the AWS Foundation will provide Pollo with a \$40,000 scholarship sponsored by the Miller Electric Manufacturing Company. Travel and related expenses associated with the Japan and Ireland trips were covered by AWS, Miller Electric Manufacturing Company, United Association of Plumber and Pipe Fitters Local 72, AWS Wyoming Section, and AWS District 20 Director Bill Komlos.

Note: To view photos associated with this release, please visit the [press photo gallery in AWS’ press room](#): <http://www.aws.org/pr/photos.html>.

About AWS

The American Welding Society (AWS) was founded in 1919 as a multifaceted, nonprofit organization with a mission to advance the science, technology and application of welding and allied joining and cutting processes, including brazing, soldering, and thermal spraying. Headquartered in Miami, Florida, and led by a volunteer organization of officers and directors, AWS serves more than 50,000 members worldwide and is composed of 22 districts with 250 sections and student chapters. For more information, visit the Society’s website at <http://www.aws.org> and click on “[pressroom](#).”