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Mark Triumphs In France

Local carpentry apprentice Mark Hawthorne has returned home with a silver medal from the EuroSkills competition in Lille, France.

Silver medallist Mark, from Downpatrick, competed in carpentry and is an apprentice with Patrick Trainor Joinery in Downpatrick. EuroSkills is the largest European Skills competition and took place from October 1-5. During the competition, industry, government and educational institutions came together to encourage world class standards of skills and competences in Europe.

SERC Principal and Chief Executive Mr Ken said: "Mark has represented himself and the College extremely well and demonstrated just how exciting, challenging and rewarding a course in the Further Education sector can be. For competitors it's the experience of a lifetime and recognition of outstanding achievement. This success will also give him an edge in the very competitive jobs market."

Employment and Learning Minister Dr Stephen Farry said: "Northern Ireland's strong performance at EuroSkills is once again testament to the high standards of technical and professional training in our Colleges. Our local young people have once more demonstrated to all of Europe that Northern Ireland has a workforce with the high levels of skills and training required to compete in the global economy and meet the economic challenges which lie ahead. Northern Ireland has a proud history of medal winners in



Downpatrick local apprentice Mark Hawthorne (left) returned home with a silver medal from the EuroSkills competition in Lille, France.

skills competitions, including WorldSkills."

Overall the UK team at EuroSkills won 3 gold medals, 6 silver medals and 3 Medallions of Excellence and is ranked 5th across the competing countries based on their average score.

Along with the UK Team members who competed at EuroSkills Lille 2014, Mark is currently in training as part of Squad UK for WorldSkills Sao Paulo 2015, which takes place from 11-16 August, 2015.

SERC provides a range of full and part-time courses designed to give students 'the edge'. To find out how SERC can help you 'get the edge' call 0845 600 7555, visit www.serc.ac.uk or find us on Facebook, search: South Eastern Regional College.