



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

January 14, 2009

Contact: Maureen Rich	Scott Soldat	Jane DeShong Short
Lowe's Companies, Inc.	SkillsUSA Arizona	SkillsUSA Communications
(704) 758-2298	(602) 542-5565	(703) 737-0612
maureen.a.rich@lowes.com	ssoldat@azskillsusa.org	JShort@skillsusa.org

**ARIZONA ASSOCIATION OF SKILLSUSA RECEIVES LOWE'S GRANT
TO SUPPORT 2009 TEAMWORKS COMPETITIONS**

Grant from Lowe's advances state-level construction trades workforce preparation

PHOENIX, AZ – Lowe's Charitable and Educational Foundation has awarded a \$10,000 grant to the Arizona association of SkillsUSA to support its 2009 state-level construction trades competitive event, TeamWorks. This state event requires a team of four to build a joint project in twelve hours or less, demonstrating their preparation for employment in residential construction. Team members must analyze a project drawing, write an action plan, give a presentation and demonstrate their ability to work as a team performing skills in residential carpentry, plumbing, electricity and masonry. They are also judged on cleanliness of jobsite, timeliness of completing the project and proper inventorying of tools and equipment.

The state event will be held on April 7-8, 2009 at 10AM-4PM on April 7 and 8AM to 3PM on Tuesday, April 8 at the Phoenix Convention Center, South Building. Expected to participate are 8 teams of high school and college students competing for gold, silver and bronze medallions and industry awards.

Lowe's Charitable and Educational Foundation is helping to address the country's growing skilled worker shortage and skills gap by contributing a total of \$1 million to SkillsUSA programs. In 2008, Lowe's awards SkillsUSA Arizona \$7000 for this event.

Lowe's has awarded grants to over half of SkillsUSA state associations for their 2009 TeamWorks events. "TeamWorks competitions provide a rare opportunity for today's youth to receive hands-on experience in construction trades," said Larry D. Stone, chairman of Lowe's Charitable and Educational Foundation. "By supporting TeamWorks, Lowe's is working to motivate and inspire future industry leaders and spark interest in careers where skilled workers are in demand."

The Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) projects a 13 percent increase in employment between 2004 and 2012, and 85 percent of America's jobs are now considered "skilled." A 2006 American Society for Training & Development study identified a "skills gap" in areas including: basic skills (e.g., academics, customer service, communications); technical and professional skills; management and leadership skills; and emotional intelligence, including self-discipline and persistence.

"The partnership of SkillsUSA and Lowe's will have an important impact on education and economic development," said Tim Lawrence, executive director of SkillsUSA. "SkillsUSA helps students develop their abilities in all four skills areas highlighted by employers. And, community service as service learning has documented benefits in students' education outcomes and community development. Our students and teachers are champions at work, and these grants will allow them to build lots of things together. We thank Lowe's for helping our chapters and instructors to become even more effective."

ABOUT SKILLSUSA

SkillsUSA is a national nonprofit organization of students, teachers and industry, working together to ensure America has a skilled work force. SkillsUSA helps high school and college students enrolled in career and technical education programs to excel by teaching employability skills such as communication, problem solving and leadership in conjunction with their trade, technical and service occupations skills. The association's annual membership exceeds 285,000 students and instructors in more than 3,700 schools and colleges in every state, three territories and the District of Columbia. For more information, visit www.skillsusa.org.

ABOUT LOWE'S

Lowe's is a proud supporter of Habitat for Humanity International, American Red Cross, United Way of America, and the Home Safety Council, in addition to numerous non-profit organizations and programs that help communities across the country. In 2007, Lowe's and the Lowe's Charitable and Educational Foundation together contributed more than \$27.5 million to support community and education projects in the United States and Canada. Lowe's also encourages volunteerism through the Lowe's Heroes program, a company-wide employee volunteer initiative. Lowe's is a FORTUNE® 50 company with fiscal year 2007 sales of \$48.3 billion and has more than 1,525 stores in the United States and Canada. For more information, visit Lowe.com/community.

###