



NCT auto team earns scholarship in statewide competition

Brooksville - Students in Nature Coast Technical High School's automotive department recently took third place in the Top Tech Challenge 2023, an annual competition hosted by Universal Technical Institute (UTI) in Orlando. NCT juniors, Aydan Cespedes and David Sirianni, each won \$5,000 scholarships. Also, the school's automotive department was awarded \$2,500 in tools from UTI.

The Universal Technical Institute's "Top Tech Challenge" is a competition open to high school automotive students. UTI's Orlando campus hosted the Southeast regional competition, where Nature Coast Technical High School finished third overall, it's highest finish ever. For Sirianni and Cespedes, this was their first competition, and they will have the opportunity to compete again next year. "We could not be prouder of the hard work and dedication these two students have shown and how well they have represented not only themselves, their program and their school, but all of Hernando county as well," said Barry Beyerl, the automotive program instructor at Nature Coast.

Cespedes and Sirianni's scholarships can be used, post-graduation, toward any UTI program. The company provides a system of technical colleges throughout the U.S., offering training not only in automotive technology, but other areas such as aviation, industrial maintenance, robotics and welding.

The southeast regional competition included 30 high school teams statewide who competed by diagnosing and fixing problems in areas such as air conditioning, brakes and scanner technology. The annual challenge, now in it's 10th year, allows high school students throughout Florida to test the knowledge and skills they have learned in school, and see first-hand how STEM principles are used in automotive technology careers.

From left: Barry Beyerl, David Sirianni, UTI representative Richard Neese, Aydan Cespedes, and Schools Superintendent John Stratton.

