



**STATE OF MISSISSIPPI  
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND COMMERCE**

ANDY GIPSON  
COMMISSIONER

# **PRESS RELEASE**

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## **MCEF and SkillsUSA Donate Multiple Guard Houses to Mississippi State Fairgrounds**

**JACKSON, Miss.** – Last week, the Mississippi Construction Education Foundation (MCEF), the Mississippi Department of Education (MDE) and industry partners hosted the MCEF SkillsUSA State Championship construction competition inside the Trade Mart at the Mississippi State Fairgrounds. Following the competition, eight guard houses were donated by MCEF and SkillsUSA to the fairgrounds.

“On behalf of the Mississippi State Fairgrounds, I want to thank the Mississippi Construction Education Foundation and SkillsUSA for their generous donation,” said Commissioner of Agriculture and Commerce Andy Gipson. “These organizations are teaching our young people valuable life skills as well as preparing them for the workforce, which is a serious need in both our state and country. I want to thank the students who participated in this event and for their hard work in building the guard houses that will be used by our staff for countless events in the years to come.”

This event worked with local schools to recruit and train a quality construction workforce and provide leadership in the industry for educating and promoting careers in construction, industrial maintenance, energy and manufacturing. As part of the competition, students built eight custom guard houses for the Mississippi State Fairgrounds. These guard houses, donated by MCEF and SkillsUSA, will be utilized by State Fairgrounds personnel along the Midway and other locations on the grounds for law enforcement and security purposes.

The MCEF SkillsUSA State Championship consisted of three levels of competition – high school, community college and apprenticeship – with over 300 competitors in 11 craft areas, all competing at the same time for prizes and a trip to nationals.

For more information on the various events held at the Mississippi State Fairgrounds, a branch of the Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce, visit [www.mississippifairgrounds.com](http://www.mississippifairgrounds.com) and follow the Mississippi State Fairgrounds on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter.

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**Photo attached.**



**Several George County students presented one of the guard houses completed during the Mississippi Construction Education Foundation (MCEF) SkillsUSA State Championship to Ag Commissioner Andy Gipson, as well as Mississippi State Fairgrounds security and personnel. Following the competition, MCEF and Skills USA donated eight custom guard houses to be utilized by State Fairgrounds personnel along the Midway and other locations on the grounds for law enforcement and security purposes. Pictured in Back L-R: Gage Reeves, Case Crawley, Landon Williams and Dylan Staffieri. Pictured in Front L-R: Chevis Necaise with SkillsUSA; Derrick Jordan, Assistant Chief at Mississippi State Capitol Police Department; Jimmy Herzog, Chief of Security at the Mississippi State Fairgrounds; Andy Gipson, Mississippi Commissioner of Agriculture and Commerce; Brent Bean, President of the Mississippi Construction Education Foundation; Gary Beeland, Central Area Director of the Mississippi Construction Education Foundation; Dean Barnard, Director of the Mississippi Agricultural and Livestock Theft Bureau; and Michael Lasseter, Director of the Mississippi State Fairgrounds.**