NYS SkillsUSA Photography Virtual Project

Scope of the Contest
To evaluate each contestant’s preparation for employment and to recognize outstanding students for excellence and professionalism in the field of (still) photography.

Knowledge Performance
The contest will include a Resume, Exam, Portfolio, and Video with Oral Presentation. See SkillsUSA Virtual Technical Standards for competencies measured.

Contest Information (All items must be received by due date)

PDF Resume
- Upload one file with all contestant’s one-page resume’s and include the digital link(s) to Portfolio and Zoom Recording. A link TBA
  - Click link below for Resume Rubric and scoring details
- Written Exam
  - Contestants will be provided a link to the exam to be completed virtually. Contestants will log in a scheduled Zoom session and will take the test while being proctored via Zoom.

Portfolio/Written Submission
- Write a brief narrative explaining your photograph choice, and what equipment and process you used to capture the two images.

- Upload your narrative and completed digital photographs, 2 post-processed and 1 composite into links that will be announced.

Scoring Information
The following pre-submission items will be judged by industry professionals prior to virtual in-person Zoom session. *See Technical Standards for specific judging criteria

1. Resume with embedded links to written narrative, photographs, and video photo editing process
2. Written submission of narrative and digital photographs
3. Video recording of contestant completing the photograph editing process

Photography Contest Theme:
This contest theme is open to a wide interpretation! The goal is to capture two photographs that demonstrate your technical and artistic abilities.

Both photographs should show an excellent understanding of lighting and composition. You may use equipment such as a tripod, lenses, reflectors or flash.

Upload your completed digital photographs, 2 post-processed and 1 composite into a cloud-based platform and embed the hyperlink to the file into your resume.

Post processing:
After shooting, edit your two photographs. You will also create an 8x10, 300dpi composite of your two photos. You may use Adobe Lightroom, Adobe Photoshop or any other editing software. Record your editing process from start to finish using Zoom/Teams. Upload recording to cloud-based platform and embed the hyperlink into your resume.
NYS PHOTOGRAPHY (VIRTUAL)

PURPOSE
To evaluate each contestants preparation for employment and to recognize outstanding students for excellence and professionalism in the field of (still) photography.

ELIGIBILITY
Open to active SkillsUSA members enrolled in programs with photography as the occupational objective.

CLOTHING REQUIREMENTS
Class E: Contest specific — Business Casual
• white polo shirt.
• Black dress slacks (accompanied by black dress socks or black or skin-tone seamless hose) or black dress skirt (knee-length, accompanied by black or skin-tone seamless hose).
• Black leather closed-toe dress shoes.

Contest Clothing Notes (Apply ONLY to Virtual Competitions):
• Official SkillsUSA Competition Clothing recommended but NOT required.
• Contestant clothing options include the following:
  o Official Competition Clothing.
  o Trade Appropriate Clothing.
  o Professional Dress.
  o Business Casual.
• Clothing must meet industry safety standards.
• No identification of the contestant, school or state is allowed on clothing.
• No offensive, vulgar or inappropriate images or text are allowed on contestants clothing.
• No shorts or sleeveless shirts are allowed.
• Skirts must be at least knee-length.
Proper Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) must be worn by contestant to meet all state, local and school requirements due to COVID-19.

Scoring deductions may only be given and/or disqualification of contestant if clothing safety standards are not met.

**Equipment and Materials**

This is a minimum required equipment list. Any additional accessories are acceptable and up to the discretion of the student (e.g., on-camera flash, reflector, additional lenses, etc.). The contestant will supply systems for Printing, Portrait Studio, Troubleshooting, and Color Correction. The technical committee will use Zoom or other applications to handle job interview sections.

Remember that all equipment brought on the field assignment must be carried by the student and fit in shared bus seating (in essence, one medium to large camera bag).

Provided by the contestant:
1. One DSLR or mirrorless camera with removable lens capabilities (bridge or compacts not accepted)
2. Minimum: two batteries with charger
3. Minimum: two 16 GB memory cards
4. One speedlight flash with wireless transmitter (be sure they work together)
5. One hand-held flash meter
6. USB card reader or camera USB cable
7. Adobe Photoshop (be sure Photoshop can open the cameras RAW files)
8. Two images for Print Competition (see guidelines in Scope of Contest)
9. Computer with high-speed internet capability and camera to use applications such as Zoom, Teams, etc. The minimum recommended internet bandwidth speeds for joining Zoom meetings, accessing on-demand curriculum and other online operations is 2.0 Mbps up and down. You can test your current internet speeds by following this link [http://www.speedtest.net](http://www.speedtest.net).
Allow the page to load and click on GO. Computer should have USB and/or SD card slot.

10. A secondary camera(s) may be required to provide judges with the ability to view contestants from different angles. Additional camera requirements will be located on the SkillsUSA website at http://updates.skillsusa.org.

11. A contest Proctor will be required to be on site to assist judges. A local industry expert is preferred to serve as the Proctor and shall not be an individual who has been involved with the training of the contestant(s). The Proctor will serve as the onsite ‘hands and eyes’ for the judges. Proctor will follow instructions from the judges for safety and operations related to the competition. Proctor may be asked by judges to perform several tasks such as operating a portable camera to show specific components or steps, measure parts, or any task that will provide judges with information needed to assist in accurate scoring of the contestants work or presentation. However, the Proctor shall not serve as a judge nor have any influence on contestant scores.

12. The contestants instructor or advisor shall be on site to observe all competition activities to ensure a safe and healthy competition experience for all participants. That instructor or advisor will not be allowed to interact or interfere with the competitor unless a safety issue arises that requires interaction. Any other support or interaction between the contestant and the instructor/advisor will result in disqualification.

13. All competitors must create a one-page résumé and submit an electronic copy to the technical committee chair at least seven (7) days in advance of the competition. Failure to do so will result in a 10-point penalty.

Note: Check the Contest Guidelines and/or the updates page on the SkillsUSA website at http://www.NYSSkillsUSA.org.
**SCOPE OF THE CONTEST**
The contest is defined by industry standards. The contest is divided into two parts: a written exam testing overall photographic knowledge and a skill performance.

**Knowledge Performance**
The contest will include a written knowledge exam that assesses the overall photographic knowledge through a series of multiple-choice questions.

**Skill Performance**
The contest will include a series of hands-on performance activities assessing overall photographic mechanics and techniques.

**Contest Guidelines**
1. **Written Test:** This test has a series of multiple-choice questions that cover some of the following topics:
   a. History of Photography (iconic photographers and advancements in technology)
   b. Exposure controls and their effects on images
   c. Lens choices given a photographic situation (sports, jewelry, studio portraits, etc.)
   d. General terminology
   e. Photoshop tools, workflow, processes, etc.

2. **Field Assignment:** The assignment evaluates the contestants’ creative ability and adherence to contest guidelines. Contestants are asked to capture images based on a theme chosen by the technical committee. Contestants will then choose their best images and apply global edits and light editing before producing a contact sheet for judging. Scoring is based on:
   a. Technical: exposure and focus control
   b. Creative: overall use of composition, lighting, impact, etc.
   c. Level of editing (edits must be global in nature and must not be overdone)
   d. Contestants’ adherence to time limits, location and theme
3. Conceptual Assignment: Contestants will use Adobe Photoshop to combine a minimum of three images from their chosen field assignment to produce a creative conceptual piece of art. Very few parameters are put on this contest, as it is meant to evaluate creativity.

4. Portrait Studio: Students will be evaluated on their use and understanding of studio lighting (strobes). Scoring is based on, but not limited to:
   a. Standard studio portrait lighting patterns (e.g., split, hatchet, Rembrandt, loop, butterfly, broad, short, etc.)
   b. Light ratios (due to a variety of teaching methods, contestants will be given a 'main' light aperture setting [e.g., f/11] and a stop difference for the 'fill' light [e.g., two stops])
   c. Use of a hand-held light/flash meter
   d. Interaction with the model and posing quality

5. Commercial Studio: Due to the varying nature of subject, students' commercial images will be evaluated on the final photograph. Judging is based on, but not limited to:
   a. Product placement
   b. Lighting of product
   c. Clarity of product name
   d. Use of props
   e. Overall creativity and impact of image

6. Digital Editing: Contestants are given images to manipulate in Adobe Photoshop. This contest evaluates the students' knowledge of professional editing techniques, including, but not limited to:
   a. Selections and refine edge
   b. Layer masks and adjustment layers
   c. Green Screen extractions
   d. Color correction
   e. Resizing layers
   f. Correct naming and formatting

7. Troubleshooting: Contestants will be shown a series of images that have issues commonly found in today’s digital processing. Contestants must correctly identify these problems from the list
provided. These problems include but are not limited to:
   a. Chromatic aberration
   b. Barrel distortion
   c. Aliasing
   d. White balance
   e. Halos
   f. Posterization
   g. JPEG artifacts
   h. Parallax

8. Print Competition:
   Contestants must submit two prints produced before the competition in any category of their choice. Prints will be on public display and must not contain any questionable content including but not limited to: drugs, sex, violence, illegal activity, etc. Prints must adhere to the following criteria:
   a. Print size must be an 11"x14" or 10"x15"
   b. Both prints must be mounted to a 16"x20" black foam core board (1/4" thick) with a 16"x20" black over mat
   c. Each print must have a label placed on the back upper middle section that includes the following information:
      1. Contestant number (given at the contest)
      2. Cellphone number

9. Job Interview: Contestants will be given an interview to assess their communication skills and overall job readiness.

Standards and Competencies

Note for Virtual Competitions:
Contestants may not be required to perform all the standards and competencies listed in this section. However, contestants should be prepared to perform components in all areas. Prior to the competition, the technical committee may determine which standards and competencies contestants will be perform for the virtual contests. The technical committee will determine if additional information is needed for contestants prior to the competition. These changes will be posted on the SkillsUSA Championships contest update website at:
1.0 — Apply and implement overall photographic knowledge through a multiple-choice written test
1.1 Identify advancements in photographic history
1.2 Define a variety of camera functions
1.3 Explain studio lighting patterns and settings
1.4 Define a variety of digital photographic terms and terminologies

2.0 — Apply the knowledge and skill needed to conduct a photographic field assignment and produce a contact sheet for judging
2.1 Demonstrate technical proficiency in the areas of proper manual exposure and focus
2.2 Demonstrate artistic ability through use of standard rules of art and design including, but not limited to: rule of thirds, balance, leading lines, worm’s/bird’s eye, etc.
2.3 Demonstrate an ability to capture images that adhere to the ‘theme’ of the assignment
2.4 Demonstrate the ability to format, edit and save the contact sheet using contest guidelines

3.0 — Apply the artistic techniques to manipulate multiple images in a free-form conceptual assignment
3.1 Demonstrate the ability to use various manipulative tools in Adobe Photoshop
3.2 Show an ability to adhere to contest guidelines by using the minimum number of chosen field assignment images for this assignment stated by the chairperson
3.3 Show a creative relationship between the elements used in the assignment

4.0 — Apply the knowledge and skill needed to create a standard studio portrait or commercial image
4.1 Show an understanding of proper lighting patterns on a subject’s face in a head-and-shoulder portrait (e.g., split, Rembrandt, loop, butterfly, broad, short)
4.2 Demonstrate the ability to professionally light and capture a product for use in a commercial ad
4.3 Demonstrate correct placement of main and fill lights
4.4 Demonstrate correct lighting ratios by the setting of main and fill lights (i.e., main light = f/8 and fill light = f/4)

4.5 Demonstrate understanding of correct camera settings (e.g., white balance, ISO, aperture, shutter speed)

4.6 Demonstrate the ability to correctly crop the image in-camera (e.g., head/product placement, horizontal/vertical)

4.7 Demonstrate the ability to professionally pose a portrait subject

4.8 Demonstrate the ability to use creative compositional techniques in creating a commercial image

5.0 — Demonstrate the ability to use a variety of tools and techniques in Adobe Photoshop

5.1 Apply the knowledge of manipulating a digital image through several techniques, including:
   5.1.1 Change orientation of an image
   5.1.2 Change image size and/or crop
   5.1.3 Use selection tools
   5.1.4 Transform selections
   5.1.5 Create layer masks
   5.1.6 Use adjustment layers
   5.1.7 Make tonal adjustments
   5.1.8 Save and correctly name file

6.0 — Show the ability to identify common problems in the processing and printing of digital images

6.1 Apply knowledge of troubleshooting digital images by distinguishing between a series of images. Examples may include:
   6.1.1 Identify over-exposure
   6.1.2 Identify blooming
   6.1.3 Identify aliasing
   6.1.4 Identify JPEG artifacts
   6.1.5 Identify noise
   6.1.6 Identify white balance incorrect setting
   6.1.7 Identify over-sharpening
   6.1.8 Identify color-fringing
   6.1.9 Identify posterization
   6.1.10 Identify under-exposure
   6.1.11 Identify camera shake
   6.1.12 Identify barrel distortion
   6.1.13 Identify halos
   6.1.14 Identify improper gamma
   6.1.15 Identify flash synch – too fast
   6.1.16 Identify over saturation
6.1.17 Identify perspective shift (keystoning)
6.1.18 Identify HDR (over done)
6.1.19 Identify parallax
6.1.20 Identify dirty sensor
6.1.21 Identify clogged printer nozzle
6.1.22 Identify lens vignetting

P 7.0 — Apply the knowledge and skill to submit two portfolio prints that are consistent with the following criteria:
7.1 Meet required image size of 11"x14"
7.2 Show ability to present all prints mounted to a black 16"x20" foam core board (¼" preferred)
7.3 Show ability to use black over mat on each print
7.4 Demonstrate technical proficiency through proper exposure, focus, etc.
7.5 Demonstrate artistic ability through use of standard rules of art and design such as rule of thirds, leading lines, texture and use of positive-negative space

P 8.0 — Demonstrate the knowledge skills necessary for a job interview
8.1 Present a résumé for the interview
8.2 Present a digital or print portfolio of photographic work
8.3 Demonstrate an ability to communicate knowledge of the field of photography
8.4 Demonstrate soft skills necessary for the workplace
SkillsUSA VIRTUAL PHOTOGRAPHY Competition - (NY)

This year’s virtual SkillsUSA competition will be conducted as closely to the live event as possible. The only difference is that we will be communicating via the internet rather than in person. As always, we are very excited to see the incredible talent in your work!

I. APPS NEEDED
1. **Zoom**: All contest communications will be conducted using the Zoom app.
2. **Kahoot**: While on Zoom, students will take a 50 question Knowledge Test using the Kahoot platform. Please familiarize your students with the app.
3. **DropBox**: All required contest materials will be uploaded to a dedicated shared folder. Once we receive your official email, a folder link will be emailed to you.

II. DATES & TIMES

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Time</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Contestant Meeting (Zoom)</td>
<td>Thursday April 15, 2021</td>
<td>1:00pm EST</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Upload DEADLINE (Dropbox)</td>
<td>Friday April 16, 2021</td>
<td>1:00pm EST</td>
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</tbody>
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III. CONTEST OVERVIEW
On the Contest Meeting (Zoom), the contest chair will give a clear overview of the contest guidelines, then begin the competition by administering Part 1: Knowledge Test. After the test, the students will receive . . .

1. a theme for Part 2: Field Assignment
2. images for Part 3: Digital Editing
3. a Dropbox upload link for Part 4: Print Competition

**Part 1: Knowledge Test** (400 Points) – **Zoom and Kahoot**
Please download the free Kahoot app on a smart device PRIOR to the Contest Meeting. Students will be tested on a wide variety of topics including:

A. Features of Light (white balance, patterns, ratios, etc...)
B. Digital SLR Features/Functions
C. Photo Basics (exposure, rules of art, settings, etc...)
D. Digital Imaging (Adobe Photoshop)
Part 2: **Field Assignment** (200 points) – *On your own*

Students will go on assignment and capture images that relate to a “theme” using their own supplied digital SLR & accessories. Students must demonstrate the following:

A. Adherence to Theme  
B. Technical and artistic proficiency  
C. Upload **Six** fully edited jpeg images with Short Edge = 4" at Resolution 600  
D. Example 4" x 6" at 600ppi; Or 4" x 8" at 600ppi, etc...

Part 3: **Digital Editing** (200 Points) – *On your own*

This competency evaluates the student's knowledge of basic digital editing using Adobe Photoshop. Images and detailed step-by-step instructions will be given during the meeting. Challenges will test their knowledge of the following:

A. Selection tools  
B. Layers, Adjustment Layers & Layer Masks  
C. Cloning & Healing brushes  
D. Type Tools  
E. Color Fills & Matching  
F. Image Sizing & Resolution

**NOTE:** The final uploaded image must remain a **layered** Photoshop (.psd) File. **DO NOT FLATTEN THE LAYERS.** This is the best way for the judges to evaluate their image.

Part 4: **Print Competition** (200 Points) – *On your own*

Students are required to upload **Two** digital prints that are produced prior to the competition. These images must represent the best of the student's personal abilities. Particular attention will be given to:

A. the technical & artistic aspects of the image  
B. the overall impact  
C. Upload **Two** fully edited jpeg images with Short Edge = 4" at Resolution 600  
D. Example 4" x 6" at 600ppi; Or 4" x 8" at 600ppi, etc...

IV. **UPLOAD FOLDER** *(Dropbox)*

Each student's shared Dropbox folder should contain the following items PRIOR to the DEADLINE date & time listed above:

1. **Six Field Assignment** jpeg images  
2. **One Digital Editing** Photoshop Layered PSD file  
3. **Two Print Competition** images  
4. A total of 9 files
V. CONTESTANT REQUIRED ITEMS

• Computer with Photoshop installed.
• Digital SLR or high-end mirrorless camera & lens
• SD Cards & extra batteries (Fully Charged!)
• Speedlight Flash & light meters (helpful but not mandatory)

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ON CONTEST AREAS

Part 2: Field Assignment

1. Cameras MUST be set to Manual exposure. NO version of Auto exposure is acceptable.
2. Auto focus is acceptable.
3. You can choose to shoot in RAW or JPEG modes.
4. NO communicating with other students or advisors while on shoot.
5. DO NOT rename your files. Keep the camera-generated file names.
6. DO NOT over-manipulate your images. This is a Photography contest, not a digital art or graphic design contest. Make global tonal adjustments and clean up unwanted areas of the original images to the point of showing them to a potential client.
7. Save your final edited images as JPEGs and place them into a Folder named FieldAssignment-(your contestant #). For example "FieldAssignment-10".
8. Upload the entire folder to your contest Dropbox shared folder.
9. IMPORTANT – Your Field Assignment folder MUST be named EXACTLY as instructed above or points will be deducted for misspelled words or name formatting.

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