

SPRINGFIELD

# 3 STCC cosmetology students earn scholarships in contest

A Springfield Technical Community College student from Hampden captured first place in the annual contest for the David and Andrea Whitman Scholarship.

Annika McDonald received \$1,000 for her stylistic creation. Competing against 19 of her classmates, she sculpted a swirling, auburn hairdo on a mannequin's head. The students were given an hour to create hairstyles that were judged by professionals from area salons. They also submitted essays and sat down for interviews with the judges.

"I love waves. I love the movement of hair," McDonald said. "I love how it's different. It's not your average bridal piece. It's not curly. It's just sculpted on there."

"It was the most difficult year," Judy Puffer, owner Puffer's Salon & Day Spa in Westfield, told students in the cosmetology program. "There was a lot of talent. You all did



Annika McDonald with her winning hairstyle.

impressive work."

Two students shared second place and each received \$700. They were Kathleen Murphy, of Agawam, and Sierra Blanchard, of Springfield.

The annual scholarship is awarded in memory of David Whitman. He and his wife, Andrea, were local salon owners and educators. A strong believer in education, David

Whitman selected STCC as the school for the scholarship.

The late Bill Ochoa from Ochoa Salon & Spa in East Longmeadow and South Hadley and Maureen Bellucci, of Bellucci Salon & Day Spa in Springfield, developed the scholarship, which has been awarded each year for the past 16 years. Ochoa, STCC faculty and the judges raised the mon-



Judges stand with students from the Cosmetology Program at STCC who won scholarships. The judges are, left: Judy Puffer, Steven Siclari, Edward Lockhart and Margaret Ochoa. A fifth judge, Alicsia O'Connor, is not pictured. The students are, from left: Sierra Blanchard, Annika McDonald and Kathleen Murphy.

ey for the scholarship, along with area salons that helped raise money with several fashion shows, silent auctions and performances.

McDonald, who is working toward a cosmetology certificate, said she planned to put her scholarship money toward her education. She wants to take more classes to improve her styling skills.

"It's been a big dream of mine to even compete in this, let alone win it. I'm pretty shocked to win," she said. "I

just let my creativity flow, and this is what I came up with. They loved it, and I'm happy this is how it turned out."

Along with Puffer, this year's judges were Margaret Ochoa, of Ochoa Salon & Spa; Alicsia O'Connor, of Alicsia O The Salon, Springfield; and Edward Lockhart and Steven Siclari, owners of Changes Salon, Northampton.

To apply for the cosmetology program, visit [www.stcc.edu/apply](http://www.stcc.edu/apply) or call the admissions office at 413-755-3333.