

Abilympics as a booster for training in a vocational college

Competitions for all – International Abilympics Conference

**25th to 28th of April 2010
in Oulu, Finland**

Olli Daavittila
Principal
Keskuspuiston Vocational College
Helsinki, Finland

Keskuspuisto Vocational College

- Vocational education for students with special needs
- Operating mainly in the capital region
- Development and service center for vocational special education

Keskuspuisto Vocational College

is maintained by **ORTON Foundation** and funded by Finnish Ministry of Education

The other units of ORTON Foundation are:

- ORTON Hospital Ltd (Orthopaedic hospital)
- ORTON Rehab Ltd (Medical and vocational rehabilitation centre)
- ORTON Respecta Ltd (production, delivery and service of assistive devices)
- ORTON Research (medical research centre)

ORTON Foundation have about 950 employees, 450 of them are working in Keskuspuisto Vocational College.

In April 2010 there are studying in KVC

- 900 students in the prevocational training and in the initial qualification education
 - 500 students in the initial qualifying education
 - 400 students in the prevocational training

- 96 students in the vocational education leading to further qualifications (Adult education)

- The requirements in the initial vocational qualification education are based on the national core curricula in different vocational fields and the education leads to a diploma / qualification;
- The on-the-job learning and skill demonstrations are a part of the vocational education;
- The job coaches support the on-the-job learning of students with difficulties in independent working and social adaptation on the work place;
- About 55 percent of our students get employed in the open labour market after the graduation.

The sectors and fields of the initial vocational education leading to certification in KVC

1. The Sector of Technology and Transport

- Computer and telecommunication technology
- Logistics
- Metal and Machinery
- Property Maintenance Technology
- Surface Treatment Technology
- Technical Design
- Upholstery
- Vehicle Technology

2. The Sector of Tourism, Catering and Home Economics

- Catering Services
- Cleaning Services
- Household Services

3. The Sector of Culture

- Audiovisual communication
- Dancing
- Handicraft and Art Industry
- Music
- Piano tuning

4. The Sector of Welfare and Health

- Welfare and health care

5. The Sector of Business and Administration

- Business and economics

6. The Sector of Sciences

- Computing

Further Qualifications

1. Further qualification for special needs assistant in education
2. Further qualification for masseuse / masseur
3. Further qualification for instructor of intellectually disabled
4. Further qualification for cleaner
5. Further qualification for painter
6. Further qualification for restorer
7. Further qualification for upholsterer
8. Further qualification for restorer master
9. Further qualification for painter master
10. Further qualification for upholsterer master

KVC taking part in the skill competitions

We started in the year 2007 by taking part in the International Abilympics in Shizuoka Japan.

- Finland had four contestants in Abilympics in Shizuoka, two of the were from KVC
- Our students took part in Electronic testing and assembly and in Poster design
- Our contestants were second year students in the initial qualification education
- They were 19 and 20 years old
- This was the start, there after we have had competitors yearly in the Finnish national competitions

KVC taking part in the skill competitions

- Year 2008 our students did win two gold medals
- Year 2009 two gold medals and one silver medal
- This year here in Oulu we have seven competitors in four events
 - Caring
 - Cleaning
 - Cooking
 - Electronic testing and assemble
 - Sale and customer service

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What's the profit of taking part in Abilympics

- 1. The participation gives a standard of comparison for a college**
 - What is the level and quality of our education and training?
 - What are our strengths and improvement needs?
- 2. The training for the students and coaches is common for all**
 - This promotes the integration and gives new experiences for the students and instructors of vocational special education.
 - It also increases the appreciation of special education and special education students.
- 3. The success in the Abilympics enhances the attractiveness of special education students in the labour market**

What's the profit of taking part in Abilympics

4. The skill competitions provide goals for all and stimulate the special education students to set high level targets for them selves.
5. The successful students are examples to follow for the other students.
6. The competitions give chances for co-operation between colleges and reduce the gap between the regular and special education colleges.
7. It is a great event for a student to have a chance to take part in a national Skill competition, and it is in many ways quite an unique experience as a competitor in the International Abilympics .
8. The participation means social contacts with people from different parts of the globe and give enhances understanding different kind of cultures and people.

Some wishes for the Abilympics

- 1. It would be better if there would be some age limits for the competitors or some categories of age ranges;**
- 2. The Finnish competitors are mainly students in vocational education – they are not experts yet. The students should have their own categories, too;**
- 3. A wide participation in Abilympics even from the European countries would be very desirable – then it would be possible to compare the level of vocational education in the European context;**
- 4. If the chances to get some success in Abilympics are very limited or poor, it diminishes the interest to keep up with.**

Thank you very much for your attention!

I hope all good to you and to Abilympics.