

Bathurst resident takes silver

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A New Brunswicker placed second in an international website design competition this weekend in Calgary.

Jason Valdron, 18, of Bathurst was one of eight Canadians to take home a medal from the 2009 WorldSkills, an international skills, trades, and technologies competition. More than 45 countries sent youth between 18 and 22 to compete in 45 different categories.

"I'm fairly impressed with the result," Valdron said Tuesday by phone from the Calgary International Airport.

In the competition, Valdron and other participants had 22 hours to develop a website. "Usually it takes a month or two," he said.

In several roughly three-hour periods over the week-long competition the contestants designed and built individual websites that were based on job and resume listings for skills and trades professions.

Valdron, who began teaching himself web coding off the Internet as a pre-teen, said the project itself wasn't difficult for him.

"It was basically just repeating things I've already done," he said. "It's still the same techniques and the same coding."

But doing it in such a short period of time was the challenge.

"It's really mentally exhausting," he said.

Valdron said he was only one point shy of winning the gold medal, which went to a contestant from Switzerland. Although the competition was close he said he isn't disappointed.

"Not at all, I'm really glad with my results. I did the best I can," he said. "It's pretty cool, I'm like the second best in the world kind of."

Valdron qualified for the international competition by winning the country-wide championship, SkillsCanada, in May 2008, also in Calgary.

Not long after that he started training for the WorldSkills competition, which he said felt like it lasted a month.

"It's been a really long week," he said.

But in the end he said it was worth it.