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**Ashton Wooden, Muskogee, cuts hair in the Cosmetology lab on Indian Capital Technology Center's Muskogee Campus. Wooden has been nominated for the State SkillsUSA Outstanding Breaking Traditions Student for 2009.**

**Ashton Wooden Named SkillsUSA  
Outstanding Breaking Traditions Student For 2009**

The Cosmetology SkillsUSA Chapter on Indian Capital Technology Center's Muskogee Campus, has named Ashton Wooden the SkillsUSA Outstanding Breaking Traditions Student for 2009.

The Breaking Traditions Awards are sponsored by the Oklahoma Department of Career and Technology Education and spotlights students who have chosen specific career and technology programs because of their interests and abilities and who have not let their gender influence their decisions to prepare for nontraditional careers.

Wooden is a junior at Muskogee High School. He is an active member of his SkillsUSA Chapter and holds the office of Sergeant-at-Arms. This will be his first year to compete in competitions. "I have enjoyed learning leadership skills," says Wooden "SkillsUSA has offered me many opportunities to expand my experiences."

Wooden chose the field of cosmetology because he enjoys cutting hair. "My dad used to take me to the barber shop to get my hair cut," says Wooden. "I just loved going to the barber shop. There were three barber chairs in the shop and I would entertain my self just watching how the barbers cut hair. There was a lot of talking going on at the same time. Everyone would talk about what was going on in town and politics. I just loved going to the barber shop."

Wooden began cutting his own hair and then began giving his friends haircuts. "I loved cutting hair," says Wooden. "My friends would come for haircuts for the weekend or special occasions. When we were studying career paths at school; I decided I needed to take cosmetology at the Tech Center to learn how to be a real barber and to get my license. I know that my interest and abilities are to be a barber. Gender shouldn't get in the way of following your dream.

Wooden now has a plan. He is joining the Self Employment Education Training (SEET) program offered at the Tech Center, and will sit for his Cosmetology license. He plans to

get his Associate Degree and then go to a four year university for a degree in Business Administration. "I'll be able to work my way through school doing what I love to do," says Wooden. "Someday I hope to own my own barber shop. It's my dream, but I know that with the right skills and the desire to succeed, my dream will become a reality."