



September 2025

Student Connection



CUYAHOGA VALLEY CAREER CENTER

Rylee Basel

North Royalton



Rylee Basel, a senior at North Royalton High School, is currently enrolled in the Auto Body Repair & Refinishing program at CVCC, taught by instructor Michael Kapis. Rylee has always had an interest in the automotive industry — partly because of her uncle, who she often watched work on cars while he explained what he was doing. His passion sparked her curiosity, and she realized it might be something she'd enjoy too. When the opportunity came to attend CVCC, she decided to give the program a try and quickly fell in love with it.

"Not only was I interested in exploring this field, I wanted to prove to myself that I could succeed," Rylee shared. "Being a girl in a male-dominated class and industry is definitely challenging. At first it was tough. I felt like I constantly had to prove myself, but over time it's gotten easier, and Mr. Kapis has played a huge role in that. He's pushed me out of my comfort zone and encouraged me to compete in SkillsUSA."

Rylee's dedication has paid off. She placed 4th in the state for estimating at the SkillsUSA competition last school year as a junior, making her the #1 junior estimator in Ohio! This year, she's aiming for nationals. "Joining SkillsUSA has been one of the best decisions I've made. A few months ago, I had the amazing opportunity to serve as a delegate at nationals. I'm at nearly every competition, even if I'm not competing." Rylee's leadership extends beyond competition. She currently serves as the Committee Chair for projects within the CVCC chapter and says she's embracing every opportunity that comes her way. "Whether it's volunteering or stepping into a new role, I'm taking advantage of every opportunity that comes my way."

In class, Rylee is known for her positive attitude and willingness to help others. "Rylee is an outstanding student," says Mr. Kapis. "She participates every day, supports her classmates, and always brings a smile to class. She's truly an all-around great person." One of Rylee's favorite hands-on experiences in class so far has been utilizing the paint booth. "It's been so fun to paint panels and fix blemishes. Learning how to properly use a paint gun has been one of the highlights of the program for me."

Outside of CVCC, Rylee stays busy with her other passions. She's an active member of North Royalton High School's theatre department, this year will be her seventh show, and she also works at O'Reilly Auto Parts. Rylee's advice to others considering a nontraditional path: "Step out of your comfort zone. I know it can be hard, especially in male-dominated fields like the automotive industry, but prove to yourself and to others that you can do it. Because you absolutely can." CVCC is so proud of you, Rylee! We can't wait to see all you accomplish this year and beyond.

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