

Every year a graduating 5th year Inside Wire Apprentice is chosen to compete in the Western States Competition. Local Unions from the nine Western States select one apprentice each and invite them to compete. The 2009 competition was held on September 19th in Medford, Oregon.

When I turned out with the 2009 graduating class I was lucky enough to be chosen as the IBEW 617 representative. It was a truly awesome experience, and now I want to share my experience with the membership

I competed in 7 events over the duration of an 8 hour day. The 7 events were: 1) Draw a working motor control ladder diagram using a given scenario of what needed to be controlled. 2) Residential installations for; three-way switches, doorbell, receptacle, lights and switched plug. 3) Written test consisting of 50 questions on transformers, theory, formulas, ohms law and code. 4) Material identification. 5) Wiring an actual set of motor controls using my drawing. 6) Bending an offset and back to back 90`s on a single piece of 1/2" rigid conduit using a hickey. 7) Bending back to back 90`s and a three point saddle in 1/2" EMT conduit using a hand bender.

This competition was one of the most intense experiences of my life, but it was also one of the most unforgettable moments I`ve ever been privileged enough to be a part of. I met so many different people from so many different places who all came together for the same reason, and that reason is pride. Pride in our union, pride in our craft, and pride in ourselves and our families for what we`ve accomplished.

I`d really like to say thank you to everyone involved for allowing me this incredible experience, and I hope to see more interest and involvement in future competitions. I will be making a presentation at the December Membership Meeting complete with power point and photographs. I hope to see you all there.

Jillian Elliot

Inside Wire Journeyman

