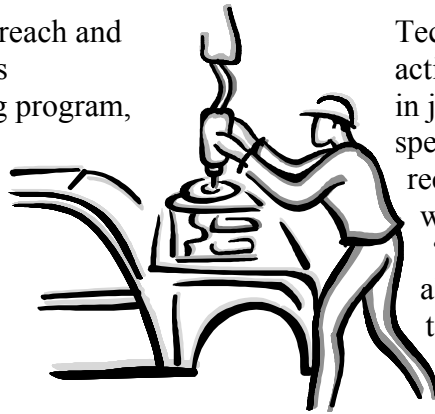


TECH TRAINING UPDATE:

WANADA Technician Apprenticeship Program Opens to All Dealers

Techs Available Now, More Dealership Sponsors Needed

To broaden the outreach and participation in its apprenticeship training program, WANADA is opening up the program to dealerships of all brands, not just Ford products dealers. The objective is to encourage more dealership sponsors, greater involvement by other manufacturers, and to fill out available space in our apprenticeship program.



Ford Motor Company, which has approved the new policy, will continue to offer its full support for the Ford/WANADA Technician Apprentice Training Program by providing cars, tools, equipment and access to its complete training curriculum. Apprentices sponsored by Ford products dealers will continue to receive manufacturer-specific training as well as training for full ASE certification.

However, other make dealers can now take advantage of the program to help their own techs achieve ASE certification as Master

Technicians. Additionally, WANADA is actively looking to involve other manufacturers in joining the Ford program to provide their own specific training curriculums to help apprentices receive manufacturer certification for warranty work.

“This broadens our current program to accept all dealers and encourage other manufacturers to offer assistance with cars, tools and programs and, eventually, closer relationships with the program,” said Richard Snyder of Jerry’s Lincoln-Mercury/Jeep, WANADA’s tech training taskforce leader.

“Kids currently in the program are eligible to go to any make dealership as soon as we get dealers to say ‘yes,’” he added.

Wanted: More Dealer Sponsors

Unlike other tech training programs, WANADA requires that apprentices be sponsored by a dealership for the cost of the

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DEALER ALERT:

DC DMV Kills Inspection Fee

The DC Department of Motor Vehicles has notified WANADA that, effective September 4, 2003, it will no longer charge a \$25.00 inspection fee for NEW vehicles. There will, however be a \$10.00 sticker fee charged. A new vehicle is defined as one that has never been registered before. The inspection sticker is good for two years.

WANADA Apprenticeship Program *(Continued from page 1)*

training. Currently, there are more qualified applicants than dealer sponsors. So, dealers—*all dealers*—may now take advantage of this opportunity to fill the high demand for qualified technicians by becoming sponsors for these apprenticeship students.

The best reference is the dealer who has signed on to the program, like WANADA Chairman Vince Sheehy, who has been a participant and strong advocate of the program from the beginning.

“Our service management feels WANADA’s tech training has been a highly productive approach to recruiting and training new techs,” said Sheehy. “It certainly has been a great avenue for us to bring in talented and motivated young apprentices, and I highly recommend the program to all dealers now that Ford has consented to an open program.

“In general, high caliber individuals have

Pre-Apprentice, Entry-Level Techs Available Now

WANADA is putting out the call to dealerships that are looking for entry-level employees to consider trainees who have completed a pre-apprenticeship program at Ballou High School in DC. Ballou’s tech training is sponsored by WANADA, Ford Motor Company and the DC Department of Employment Services (DOES). Several students have completed this training, which consists of 16 weeks of lab training in shop safety and methods, and are ready and eager for entry-level jobs, such as make-ready or quick lube.

“These students have been screened and pre-tested, they come to school on time and do their assignments. They have enough skill and interest for starter positions, and we believe they’ll make fine techs one day,” said Mike Wilson, who oversees WANADA’s training and education programs.

For more information on acquiring such apprentices, contact Bill Belew at WANADA, (202) 237-7200.



“It certainly has been a great avenue for us to bring in talented and motivated young apprentices, and I highly recommend the program to all dealers now that Ford has consented to an open program.”

—Vince Sheehy

been attracted to the program,” he added. “And with the support of WANADA’s tech team to stay in close touch with the kids and their service managers and solve any problems that crop up, we have had good success with our trainees.”

Now into its third year, the program operates at Montgomery College in Rockville, MD, and Marshall Academy in Falls Church, VA, with a third facility under development in Prince William County, VA. The highly structured program combines classroom instruction with hands-on, mentored training at the dealership. WANADA recruits and screens applicants from area high school programs, and provides follow-up support for all students.

The result has been a strong retention rate (86%), rewarding careers for young people, and success in addressing the chronic shortage of qualified auto technicians. With these programs serving as a model, WANADA is approaching other automakers with an eye to establishing additional tech training throughout the area.

Dealers interested in sponsoring apprentices, from existing staff or WANADA’s recruitment pool, should contact Bill Belew at (202) 237-7200.

MARKET FACTOIDS:

Blue Book's Top 20 Most Researched Vehicles

Every month more than five million unique visitors go online to Kelley Blue Book's Web site, www.kbb.com, many of them researching new vehicles.

During the month of August 2003, more than 28 million vehicle pricing reports were generated. In-market shoppers top research pick was the Honda Accord, which has held the No. 1 slot all year. Toyota's Camry currently tops the Accord in overall sales-to-date this year and ranks No. 3 on August's Most Researched list.

The Ford F-Series trucks have held a top-five position on this list for more than three years, spending a good amount of time at No. 1.

The Top 20 Most Researched Vehicles

1. Honda Accord
2. Honda Civic
3. Toyota Camry
4. Chevrolet/GMC Silverado/Sierra
5. Ford F Series
6. Nissan Altima
7. Dodge Ram Pickups
8. Toyota Tacoma
9. Toyota Highlander
10. Honda Pilot
11. Honda Odyssey
12. Toyota 4Runner
13. BMW 3 Series
14. Infiniti G35
15. Honda CR-V
16. Volkswagen Jetta
17. Ford Explorer
18. Volkswagen Passat
19. Nissan Murano
20. Chevrolet/GMC

Gas Mileage Affecting Buyer Choice

Gas mileage is creeping up as a factor in new car sales, according to the just released J.D. Power & Associates 2003 Escaped Shopper Study. Gas mileage is now fifth on the list of reasons new-vehicle buyers reject one model over another-up from 13th in 2002. The study, based on responses from 32,330 new-vehicle owners, examines the reasons new-vehicle shoppers reject some of the potential vehicles they are considering.

"Between the concerns over the Middle East, high gas prices and the growing trend toward larger and more powerful engines, it is not surprising that 15 percent of new-vehicle buyers cite gas mileage as a reason for rejecting a vehicle they once considered buying," said Chris Denove, partner at J.D. Power and Associates.

Price remains a big factor in consumer decisions making them more likely to purchase the least expensive

model on their consideration list, the group said. Hyundai, Kia, Suzuki and Mitsubishi are maintaining high closing ratios and are cross shopped against other makes. The survey also found that 16 percent of vehicles are rejected because of lack of rebates or incentives.

The top 10 reasons cited by vehicle owners for rejecting particular models are:

1. Total price too high
2. Total monthly payment too high
3. Didn't like exterior styling/design
4. Not available with rebates/incentives like vehicle ultimately purchased
5. Wanted better gas mileage
6. Concerned about reliability
7. Not available with special low-interest financing
8. Didn't like look/design of interior
9. Salespeople/dealer didn't act professionally
10. Vehicle was too small

Cars and Trucks Now Outnumber Drivers

For the first time, the typical American family has more vehicles in the garage than licensed drivers in the house.

There are 107 million U.S. households, each with an average of 1.9 cars, trucks or sport utility vehicles and 1.8 drivers, the Bureau of Transportation Statistics reported. That equals 204 million vehicles and 191 million drivers.

The last time the survey was conducted in 1995, those numbers were equal.

First Tee Golf Classic Looking for Entrants, Sponsors

DARCARS Automotive Group, a major sponsor of The First Tee of Montgomery County, is putting out the word to dealers who want to have some fun by participating in or helping to sponsor First Tee's annual fall Golf Classic on Monday, September 22 at the Laytonsville Golf Course. Registration begins at 11:30 a.m. with the driving range open at the same time. There will be demonstrations and mini-lessons at 12:00 p.m., with a shotgun start at 1:00 p.m. "The 19th Hole" reception and awards ceremony begins at 6:00 p.m..

The First Tee is a national program under the umbrella of the World Golf Foundation, which provides affordable and accessible golf opportunities and related life skills to needy youngsters throughout the nation. Members of the USGA, PGA, LPGA, PGA Tour support the work of the First Tee, with President George Bush serving as national chairman.

The program operates at both the Laytonsville and White Oak golf courses during the spring, summer, and fall seasons. Over 60 young people received instruction in golf and life skills each season. For more information, refer to the brochure enclosed with this WANADA Bulletin, or call Gary Amey, DARCARS at (301) 622-0010.



DEALER Magazine, AYES Announce Dealer of the Year Award

DEALER magazine and the Automotive Youth Educational Systems (AYES), are sponsoring a "Fueling Tomorrow" Dealer of the Year Award. The first award will be announced at the NADA Convention in Las Vegas, Jan. 31- Feb. 3.

The "Fueling Tomorrow" Dealer of the Year is chosen according to AYES criteria, which is based on that dealer's personal activities that promote technical careers in his or her community. Such activities involve meetings with local educators to talk about auto retailing careers, inviting school tours of the dealership, making internships within the service department available to high school and technical center students interested in an automotive technician career and by providing an open, mentoring environment within the dealership to develop the talent dealerships will require for the future.

"We're asking dealers to be involved in an education partnership in their community. That means actually participating in the education process and getting involved with that age-old concept and principle known as mentoring - something we've never had with technical education in the United States," said AYES CEO Larry Cummings. "Those dealers who do make a difference deserve recognition."

Along with the MNCTDA dealers, WANADA funds the work of Ric Glenn, AYES coordinator for the Metro DC area and the state of Maryland.

Nominations for the '04 award are open until Oct. 15. Contact Susan Doherty at AYES at 248-526-1750 or by email sdoherty@ayes.org for nomination information or to learn more about AYES. Visit the online version of DEALER magazine at www.DEALER-magazine.com.

Staying Ahead...

It's so much easier to suggest solutions when you don't know too much about the problem.

—Malcolm Forbes

Enclosures:

- Letter to Dealers: New WANADA Apprentice Training Policy and Response Form
- The First Tee of Montgomery County Fall Golf Classic brochure