

# THE WANADA BULLETIN

NEWS AND INFORMATION FOR AND ABOUT FRANCHISED NEW CAR DEALERS IN THE WASHINGTON AREA

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## WANADA/Ford Tech Training Program, A Growing Success

*Second Year Kick-Off Meeting, Feb 27*

"I would certainly take a WANADA/Ford trainee over any tech you can find through a newspaper ad," said John Swift, operations manager for Cherner Lincoln-Mercury/Isuzu/Kia in McLean, VA. "With WANADA doing the pre-employment screening and aptitude testing, this makes the service manager's life a lot easier when you have somebody who is *pre-qualified*."

"We had several applicants and we picked our trainee, **Nam Nguyen**, because he seemed very eager, attentive and alert," said Swift, who started as a tech trainee himself in 1961 and has been in service and parts management for 33 years, the last seven with Cherner. "Nam's a great kid with a good attitude, and he's doing a good job for us."

Swift's praise is typical of service managers participating in the WANADA/Ford Technician Apprenticeship Training Program that kicked off last year with 31 trainees. Today, 26 apprentices are in the

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### Groundhog Job Shadow Day At DARCARS Lanham Ford

Co-sponsored by monster.com and News Corporation, Groundhog Shadow Day was created as a way to provide high school students, grades 9-12, with an up-close look at how skills learned in school are put into action in the workplace by allowing students to shadow volunteer adults for a day at their places of business.

That sounded like a good idea to John Randolph, service manager for DARCARS Lanham Ford, who assigned two students from Washington's Roosevelt High School to shadow Master Technician Warren Butrim and Juan Ticona, who is one of four WANADA/Ford Apprenticeship Program trainees the dealership employs.

The kick-off day for Groundhog Shadow Day was February 1, but the program will continue throughout the month. For more information or to get involved in the program, log onto [www.jobshadow.org](http://www.jobshadow.org), or call (202) 638-7336 or e-mail: [msingleton@dcchamber.org](mailto:msingleton@dcchamber.org).



**Two students from Roosevelt High School in DC spent the day "shadowing" WANADA Ford program trainee Juan Ticona (left) and master technician Warren Butrim.**

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program which is a retention rate of 81 percent – excellent for a tech training program.

Sixty-five trainees are poised for the next class, which begins with assignments to dealerships in May and June and classroom training beginning in September. For the 2003 class, 109 trainees have shown sincere interest and that number is expected to grow as program coordinators conduct more recruitment visits to local high schools.

“Everybody wins,” says Mike Wilson, Ed.D., who has developed and coordinated other WANADA-sponsored technician training programs around the Beltway and is responsible for the day-to-day administration of the WANADA/Ford program. “We’ve had an enthusiastic response from dealers and trainees and terrific support and assistance from the Ford technical people, who not only come to classes and provide material and equipment but are doing technical training for the instructors before we do each unit of the Ford program.

Open to all Ford, Lincoln-Mercury, Jaguar, Land Rover, Mazda and Volvo dealers, WANADA will be holding its second kickoff of the WANADA/Ford Apprentice Training Program on Wednesday, Feb. 27, at Kenwood Country Club on River Road in Bethesda, MD. Wilson strongly encourages all Ford product dealers and their service managers to attend “and

let us know how many new apprentice technicians you’d like for the coming year.”

The program is a unique cooperative effort between a manufacturer and a dealer association to “grow your own” qualified technicians at a time when there is a high demand and fierce competition among various industries for technicians. Building on prior partnerships with DC, Maryland and Northern Virginia school systems, the program is designed for *qualified* high school graduates.

The student apprentices work 40 hours a week at participating dealerships for on-the-job training, where they receive mentoring from a master technician. Around-the-clock advice and counsel also is available from Wilson and WANADA member relations specialists Archie Avedisian and Bill Belew.

Apprentices receive college credit for six hours of classroom instruction each week. Classroom instruction takes place one day a week, 9 a.m. to 4:40 p.m., at Montgomery College in Rockville, MD, and two evenings a week at Marshall Academy in Falls Church, VA. At both facilities, Ford is providing the latest *manufacturer-specific* curriculum as well as vehicles, equipment, tools, engine transmissions, shop manuals, self-study guides and computer software.

The goal is for students to complete the Automotive Service Excellence (ASE) exami-

nations and become certified automobile master technicians. ASE certification is used as progress benchmarks, with steady pay increases for each level achieved.

WANADA’s goal is to encourage other manufacturers to follow Ford’s lead, and eventually establish training centers throughout the Washington metropolitan area.

For more information, contact Mike Wilson, Archie Avedisian or Bill Belew at WANADA, (202) 237-7200.

### **WANADA/ Ford Apprentice Training Meeting Wed., Feb. 27**

On February 27, at 10 a.m., WANADA will be holding its second kickoff of the WANADA/Ford Apprentice Training Program. All Ford, Lincoln-Mercury, Mazda, Volvo, Land Rover and Jaguar dealers and their service managers are encouraged to attend. This program has been extremely successful in selecting and training new technicians for our industry.

The meeting will be held at Kenwood Country Club on River Road in Bethesda, MD. Come prepared to let us know how many new apprentice technicians you’d like for the coming year.

# Study Shows Auto Tech & Retailing Jobs Go Wanting Even in Gloomy Economy

In a time of gloomy economic and employment news, government figures forecast that the automotive industry needs 35,000 people for new high-paying auto technician jobs and tens of thousands more for sales, finance and other jobs in auto dealerships in this decade alone. But a new study released at the 2002 NADA Convention by Automotive Retailing Today (ART) shows that few students, parents and educators are aware of these jobs or job benefits.

ART released the results of a new comprehensive study it commissioned with Wirthlin Worldwide to measure awareness of and attitudes towards auto industry careers among students, parents and educators. The bad news is that only two percent of all teens (13-18 years old) would choose a career in the automotive industry, according to the study. But the good news is that the disinterest results

from a lack of information, and quickly reverses when they learn about the high demand and pay.

"Sixty-five percent said that they would be more likely to seek a career as an automotive technician when they heard that, as master technicians, they can make in a range of \$70,000-\$100,000 a year doing something that can give them a great deal of job satisfaction," said ART Chairman Jim Willingham.

The survey also found that on average teens begin thinking about career plans at age 13, and that parents strongly steer those decisions. While peer influence generally is a huge factor in shaping the attitudes of teens, when it comes to career choice, 80 percent said they trust their parents "a great deal," compared to just 34 percent who trust their friends and 42 percent who rely on their teachers.

The survey also found that 45 percent of all teens say they will make a career decision in their junior or senior year in high school.

Teens say their parents are the most influen-

tial. But parent responses to the survey show they have the most out-of-date attitudes towards jobs in this sector, expressing uncertainty as to how intellectually challenging an auto technician career is for their child.

"Forget the old mechanic and salesman stereotypes," Willingham said. "The times have changed, and automotive service and retailing are now careers that combine job satisfaction, continuous learning, and economic security. It's an employee's market and will be for the foreseeable future," Willingham said.

Educators, while not as influential on teens as are their parents, are more likely to recognize the skills training required for careers in the

***"Forget the old mechanic and salesman stereotypes. The times have changed."***

—ART Chairman Jim Willingham.

automotive field. But 78% of teachers and 52% of counselors say they do not receive specific information about automotive careers to share with their stu-

dents. And this misses a real opportunity to inform students as 52% of teachers and 68% of counselors say they speak with their students specifically about career options "quite often" at school.

The study demonstrates a need to do a better job in combating outdated images of the industry and raising awareness among students, parents and educators about the incredible potential of these jobs. The survey demonstrates when people understand the nature of today's auto technician and retailing jobs, these careers become attractive. The survey also shows that the industry needs to create awareness earlier in the career decision-making process.

Currently, there are a number of auto dealer and manufacturer programs aimed at recruiting students into the auto careers. ART will share the results of this new study with these groups in order to stimulate an industry-wide discussion on how the industry can better reach out to students, parents and educators.

## GM Chairman Bob Lutz Receives WAPA Golden Gear Award

Bob Lutz, chairman of GM North America, was in town last week to receive the Golden Gear Award from the Washington Automobile Press Association (WAPA). The award was made for "a lifetime of pushing the automotive envelope," and Lutz regaled auto writers and guests with accounts of his many adventures throughout his 40 year career. His motto, said Lutz, pretty much sums up his career: "Often wrong, but seldom in doubt."

Lutz is seen here with his award and Geoff Pohanka, NADA director for Metropolitan Washington and past WANADA chairman.



## Cowles 500 Promotion Benefits Area Homeless Center

Cowles Ford and Cowles Nissan Chrysler in Woodbridge, VA will be holding "The Cowles 500" on Saturday, February 16 with the goal of selling 500 vehicles between them. As part of the promotion, the dealerships will donate a portion of each sale in February (up to \$2,500) to the Hilda Barg Homeless Prevention Center in Woodbridge, a 30-bed center that opened in 1990 and serves homeless families and singles throughout the area.

"We are very grateful to the Cowles family for their generous donation, and for making the public aware about our center and the issues faced by our area's homeless," said Gayle Sanders, the center's director. "There is a misconception about the people who come to us. Many of them have jobs, but they can't afford housing in this area."

"We are honored to be associated with the Hilda Barg Homeless Prevention Center," said Mickee Cerase, general manager of Cowles Ford. "We hope a lot of people visit our dealerships on February 16 for some free food and beverages, to learn more about the center and to win tickets to one of those fantastic races at Dover Downs."

## The Automotive Career Technologies Program Needs Your Old Vehicles

Support your up and coming technicians by ensuring dealership managers know the option exists to donate vehicles to our regional technician training programs. Consider taking the tax savings and trading in that unit to aid the future of your business. For more information, refer to the enclosed poster and call the Automotive Trades Foundation at (301) 921-2190.

### Staying Ahead...

*Lord grant me chastity, but not just now.*

—St. Augustine

### Enclosure:

- ACT Vehicle Trade-In Poster
- Universal Loss Prevention Series "Driver Safety: Preventing Common Vehicle Collisions"