

Career Opportunities

Help Wanted: Automotive Service Technicians

(NAPSA)—One of the biggest challenges facing many companies today is finding knowledgeable, highly-skilled employees. This is especially true for automotive dealerships and repair shops.

There were 818,000 automotive service technician and mechanic jobs available, according to a U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) report. The DOL expects the demand for technicians to increase about 10 to 20 percent annually through 2012.

That means dealerships and repair shops will need to fill more than 1.3 million new technician positions. Fortunately, there are organizations working aggressively to help the automotive repair industry meet its employee needs now and in the future.

One of those organizations is the Automotive Youth Educational Systems (AYES). Founded in 1995, it's a business and education partnership of 14 automotive manufacturers, the National Automobile Dealers Association (NADA), state dealer associations and state departments of education or labor, that combine to provide school-to-work training to students at hundreds of high schools.

The AYES program is now poised for expansion thanks to a recent federal grant from the Labor Department. The \$2.2 million grant will enable the group to develop an online process within dealerships that will deliver its training curriculum and process through dealerships not served by vocational schools. The grant also will help develop an online program for learners of all ages who seek to pursue a new career as an automotive service technician.

The Department of Labor's grant will allow AYES to provide high-quality automotive training to far more young men and women



Photo: Automotive Youth Educational Systems



A student at a competition for automotive technicians in a “hands-on” repair contest.

than ever before,” said Tom Purves, CEO of BMW North America and chairman of AYES. “AYES’s new online capability will reach dealers and new learners everywhere and create options for numerous others who understand the value and opportunity that this career offers.”

Interest in online learning is growing. In 2002, about 1.6 million people took at least one online course. That grew to an estimated 1.9 million last year, according to a 2003 study by Babson and Olin colleges for the Sloan Consortium, an association that promotes online programs.

“Automotive dealerships in particular are constantly looking for highly-skilled technicians,” said Larry Cummings, AYES president and CEO. “AYES is proud to support dealerships in helping them find the right employee, and we’re thrilled to assist young people in developing a rewarding career in automotive service.”

For more information, visit www.ayes.org.