



Department of Automotive Technology News

2017 Winter/Fall Edition

Pittsburg State University

Recent Alumni Donation Helps to Re-Fuel Talks on Outdoor Lab Expansion



The Kansas Technology Center (KTC) turned 20 this year! The KTC officially opened up in the fall of 1997 and has been a huge resource to the faculty, staff, but most of all, to the students who grace her doors every day. In 1997, the automotive program had 158 majors and an abundance of space. Today, the department has over 250 majors and space is much more limited which has facilitated the need for an outside lab that can be utilized by the 2-year program, the Collision program, the Diesel/Heavy Equipment program, and the 4-year program.

Chris Davison, Director of Portfolio and Business Development for John Deere Crop Care, heard about the initiative and wanted to get the ball rolling so in November Chris and his wife Heather pledged \$21,000, which is actually \$22,000 thanks to the matching money of \$1000 from John Deere. Chris is a 2000 graduate and says he and Heather felt inspired to give back because of the education and experience he obtained while in the program, but mostly because of the faculty, citing Dr. Tim Dell as the “one who inspired us to give a little back.” He also stated, “There are many automotive alumni that have achieved more than they thought possible in their careers due to Tim and Bob and others like them who are passionate about developing their students. This donation reflects our respect for their work and we would like them to somehow benefit directly from it by making it easier for them to do what they do.”

Chris and his wife Heather, have long been supporters of the department, offering \$1,000 annual scholarships for the past 10 years. In a time of financial hardship for the university and our department, their gifts are a light that gives hope.

Not everyone can give that kind of financial support, but everyone can do something. If you feel like donating a gift to the Department of Automotive Technology, whether it is financial, technical, time, or talent, please contact Dr. John Thompson, Chair of the department, at [620-235-6516](tel:620-235-6516) or email him at john.thompson@pittstate.edu and he can help you facilitate the gift. Thank you!!!



New Automotive Department Chair

The Department of Automotive Technology is under new management. Dr. John Thompson took over as Chairman of the department in June when Dr. Bob Frisbee vacated the position for his new role as the Associate Dean. Dr. Thompson has been a full-time faculty in the department for the past 11 years serving in a number of capacities including lead faculty for the Collision Repair and Insurance Management emphasis and academic advisor for the Automotive Master degree. He is a graduate of the program (BST, 1991) and returned to teach in the department after 16 years in industry. Since transitioning into the classroom, Dr. Thompson earned a Master degree, Education Specialist degree, and Doctorate of Education and has been named Outstanding Faculty in the College of Technology (2010), and Outstanding Faculty for Pittsburg State University (2016). "It's an incredibly humbling experience" says Dr. Thompson, "and I look forward to leading the department and advancing our mission in the coming years." John is a father of four and has been married to his wife Debbie since 1990 and an avid car enthusiast who always has a project in his shop. If you're in Pittsburg sometime, please stop by and say hi to the new Chairman.



Two-Year AST Certificate Program

The Automotive Service Technology program at Pittsburg State University has implemented a new option for their students. This program is a Certificate only option for 2 year AST students. Students enrolled in this program will take FCA (Chrysler) or Subaru factory training in lieu of the general education courses required for an associate's degree. This allows us to accept more students into the program that would otherwise not be able to.



Diesel and Heavy Equipment Add Two New Trainers To The Program

"The diesel and heavy equipment program have two new simulators this semester enabling students to gain first hand experience with electronically controlled hydrostatic transmissions. Both were built with donated components. PSU student workers John Johnson and Mitchell Nowak and graduate assistant Kenneth Sculley built the trainers. Bob Schroer wired the electronic controls directed the design of the engine controls. Tim Dell directed the design of the hydrostatic drives.

The first trainer is a skid steer dual path hydrostatic transmission. It is electronically actuated and drives a pair of two-speed cam lobe hydrostatic motors. Both motors have a spring-applied parking brake. Thank you to Case New Holland for donating the electronically controlled hydrostatic pump, two variable displacement hydrostatic motors, the electronic control valve block, and the hydraulic reservoir. Thank you to Caterpillar for donating the C2.2 diesel engine. Thank you to the PSU wood technology program and plastic engineering technology program for making a mold and vacuum thermoforming the plastic covers to shield personnel from the driven sprockets.



The second trainer is a Bosch Rexroth single path electronically controlled variable displacement hydrostatic pump that drives a Bosch Rexroth infinitely variable bent-axis hydrostatic motor. The motor drives a reversible gear pump enabling a load to be applied to the simulator. Thank you to

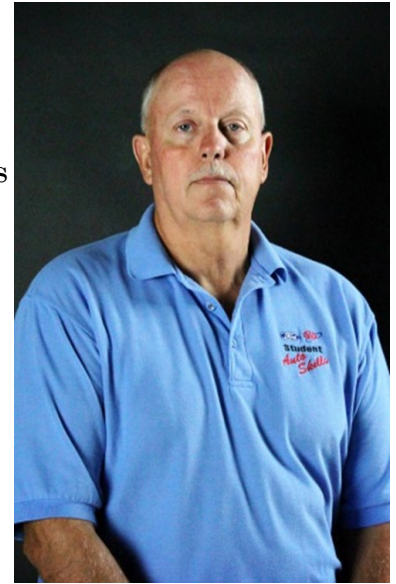


Bosch Rexroth for donating the pump, motor, computer, and electrical connectors. Thank you to Caterpillar for donating the C2.2 engine. Thank you to Case New Holland for donating the reservoir. Thank you to B&B Hydraulics for redesigning the hydraulic reservoir, fabricating the hoses, and donating the loading valves, relief valves, plumbing and labor. Thank you to Mid-South Diesel Services for rebuilding the fuel-injection pump."

Happy Retirement (sorta) to Ron Downing and Bob Schroer



This year saw the retirement of two lead faculty in the department. Ron Downing and Bob Schroer have over 80 years of combined industry experience and over 35 years of combined dedication and teaching in the department. Ron Downing began teaching at PSU in 1996 and Bob Schroer began in 2001. However, both have agreed to stay on a little longer to continue training and teaching automotive students, albeit in a part-time capacity. In the spring, Ron Downing retired as a full-time faculty but returned to teach two classes this fall. This



semester Bob Schroer did the same thing; retired from full-time only to return next spring to teach two classes. Both are still attending departmental meetings and advising students so they are only “sorta” retired. Dr. John Thompson, Automotive Technology chair, says, “This is a huge benefit to the department because it is incredibly difficult to find people with their vast industry experience and a Master degree.” Please join everyone in thanking Ron and Bob for their continued presence in the department.



Annual Phonathon Pledge-drive



Among the many challenges the Department of Automotive Technology faces, the financial stress has the biggest impact because it affects everything. Since 2008, the financial support from the state of Kansas has been reduced by over 3 million annually. We're hanging by a thread on a shoe-string budget of less than \$33,000/yr. The fact that the program continues to churn out highly technical, highly qualified graduates year after year speaks to the tireless efforts and passion of the talented faculty coupled with the financial help we receive from our alumni. The continued support of the alumni during the Annual Phonathon Pledge-drive is what's making it possible. If you have made a donation in the past, thank you VERY much for your support. You are truly making a difference. And whether you have donated in the past or not, please consider making a pledge this year. Remember, all gifts are 100% tax deductible and have a direct impact to helping purchase tools, support student scholarships, and maintain other essential departmental services and programs. If you are interested in helping, even just \$50 or \$100, please contact Dr. John Thompson at john.thompson@pittstate.edu. Thank you!!!

2018 Pittsburg State University Baja Team



This year we are gearing up for two competitions. We plan to compete in the Kansas event in May, and then travel to Oregon in June for the Western event. This year we have 20 members comprised of automotive and engineering students. The students have been working on their design for this year's vehicle; concentrating on what worked well in the past and what needs improvement. So far, the students have completed their frame and plan to work over the break on the suspension and drive train. As a group, we have decided to simplify the design of the vehicle, in hopes to increase performance and reduce weight while maintaining durability for all of the events. We are also concentrating on the static events, so that we are prepared for competition. We received feedback from many of our alumni as to how to improve in the design judging category of the event.

As in the past, this is an extracurricular activity and the students must fundraise in

order to complete the vehicle and travel to the competitions. So, you may be getting a call from a Baja member asking for help with this year's team. The Kansas event will be held May 17-20, 2018 here at Pittstate and we welcome alumni to come to the event. There are opportunities to help volunteer or just come and support the team.

Thank you for your continued support of the Pittstate Baja Team (Gorilla Racing)

For your convenience, you can donate to Pittstate's Baja Program at Pittpower.org



Follow the Automotive Department on Social Media



Pittsburg State University Automotive has now entered the social media era. We now have a Facebook page, Snapchat account, Instagram and in the works YouTube channel. The social media outlets will be used to help keeping the public and alumni informed of what is happening in the department. The other idea is to help in recruiting new students to the program. You can find them by searching

@psuautotech



First Ever Spring Enrollment for Two-Year Students begins January 2018



The AST department is now accepting students in the spring semester beginning January 2018. Previously, the AST department only allowed students to begin in the fall semester. With recent curriculum changes to the program, this has allowed us to accept students in the spring semester. In the past, students were not able to do this and were left to other options within the department or possibly them not even being able to become an automotive student at PSU. This is a great opportunity for those students now to earn a rewarding career as an Automotive Technician by attending the AST department at PSU.



PSU Automotive Student Competes in WorldSkills Event



PSU Automotive Junior, Jonathan Robertson represented the United States in the automotive technology competition at WorldSkills, held in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates, on October 15 – 18th, 2017. Jonathan held his own competing against the best technicians from 36 other countries. He trained hard and persevered through technical problems encountered in his first competition station, as well as some illness through part of the grueling four day event. We're proud of Jonathan's efforts and work ethic in preparing for this demanding event. Jon was accompanied by Mike Elder who served as the Automotive Deputy Chief Expert; responsible for Jonathan's training

and part of the skill management team that facilitated the automotive contest. Scott Norman also attended the event as the United States Technical Delegate; responsible for overseeing the training and wellbeing of all the US delegation during the competition as well as overseeing the management of several contest areas during the event.

Preparing students to compete at an international level is a monumental task that requires a great team effort. Special thanks goes out to all the PSU Automotive Department, especially Ron Downing who facilitated some training for Jonathan as well as other faculty members, and graduate assistants that stepped up to cover classes for Mike & Scott while they were gone. Additionally, the participation of the United States Team in WorldSkills would not be possible without the support of the SkillsUSA staff and many corporate sponsors that pay for training and travel expenses.



Diesel Students Visit AGCO and John Deere



Students in instructor Chauncey Pennington's AT 642 Agriculture Powertrains had the opportunity to tour a couple Ag based companies in central Kansas. They had the opportunity to tour AGCO in Hesston, KS where various hay equipment and combines are built. Thank you to alumni Matthew Keller for setting up the tour. Also on the same day the students had time to stop in and see the John Deere training center in Wichita, KS where they do various technician training. Thank you to alumni Jason Misegadis for helping set up the visit. Overall the students were very impressed with both facilities.

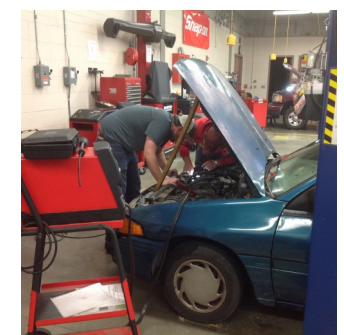
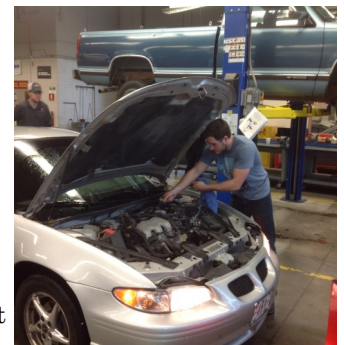
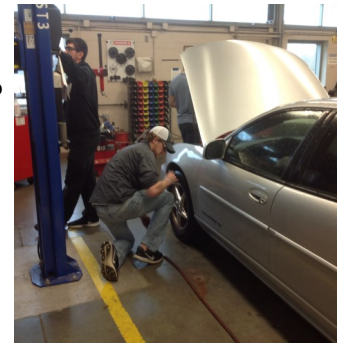
Christian Automotive Majors (CAM) Teams Up With Campus Christians in Free Safety Inspection

The Christian Automotive Majors (CAM) wanted to do a community service project so they started talking about bringing back the free safety inspection project that they had done a couple of other times in the past. When discussing this at a meeting one of the members who is also active in Campus Christians said they had been discussing doing the same project. They have a few active members that are also automotive majors. The two groups decided to combine forces on the service project and began working together to start planning and preparing for the event. The event was scheduled on Saturday, November 18 which was the weekend before Pittsburg States Thanksgiving break. The event was open to the public and to university students as a community service project to help those who would not probably take their car into an automotive repair shop because of fear that they might be charged for having their car checked out and be told they needed unnecessary repairs. Unfortunately the automotive business has a bad reputation for taking advantage of the consumer. The students wanted to eliminate this perception of the automotive industry by performing a free and honest assessment of the customer's car.

Another reason for the safety inspection was to help customers know if their vehicle was safe to travel in over the Thanksgiving break by pointing out any safety concerns and suggest that they get them repaired before traveling. No major repairs were performed by the students during the inspection. It was just an honest diagnosis of what may need to be checked out further by a licensed shop. In order to do this the students reached out to the area automotive repair shops and explained what they were doing and asked them if they would like to participate. If they said yes the group put them on a list of automotive repair facilities that were willing to give an estimate on any repairs that were found during the safety inspection. Most of the shops offered anywhere from a 10% to 30% discount on any repairs needed.

Overall the inspection went well as the group of students inspected 35 cars that day. Many items were found that needed attention and recommendations made. Even though the event was free there was a donation station set up where proceeds would go to help a local charity. There were both automotive and non-automotive students that volunteered for this event. It was also good to see two student groups come together for the same cause.

A special thanks also goes out from CAM and Campus Christians to Scott Norman and Mike Elder who gave up their Saturday to make sure the event ran smoothly.



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Save the Date!
AOD March 7 & 8, 2018
Visit www.pittstate.edu/autotech

We're on the web!

<http://www.pittstate.edu/autotech>

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Spring/Summer 2018 PSU Automotive & Diesel Calendar

January 15	Martin Luther King Jr. Holiday
January 16	Spring Semester Begins
March 1-4	Vision Kansas City
March 02	KTC Spring Open House
March 03	Rumble in the Jungle
March 05	Apple Day
March 07	Spring Automotive Advisory Board Meeting
March 08	Automotive Orientation Day
March 17	Spring Break Begins
March 28	Classwork resumes
April 03	Great Gorilla Games
April 04	School of Construction Expo
April 8-11	Industrial Tours
April 27	COT Awards Banquet
May 07	Finals Week Begins
May 11	Commencement
May 17-20	SAE Baja Pittsburg, KS
June 04	Classwork for 4 and 8 week session begins
June 18-22	National Skills USA
July 27	Summer Session Close