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Educators partner to train in-demand auto workers

Written by Abraham Galvan on August 25, 2020



Coming at a time of high

unemployment, automotive industry jobs are in demand and educational institutions were taking notice even before the pandemic's economic impact.

Miami-Dade County higher learning institutions, automotive manufacturers and retailers have joined forces to create vehicle technician programs for people looking to change or build on a lifetime career.

Warren Henry Auto Group, in partnership with the county's public school system, has launched the Warren Henry Technician Program. The two-year certified program is designed to welcome 20 students and includes classroom and hands-on instruction reinforced with high-tech computerized learning systems.

"The automotive industry is experiencing a technician shortage of over 40,000 and during this time of extreme uncertainty and high unemployment rates, we want to be part of the solution," said Eric Day, Warren Henry's chief financial officer.

The program's curriculum is related directly to the areas of the ASE Certification and is designed to train technicians in diagnosing and repairing Jaguars and Land Rovers, Mr. Day said.

"A master technician can earn around \$90,000 or higher per year, which is another great reason to enroll," he said. "This program will allow us to grow our own technicians and make sure these students learn how to become adaptive in a rapidly changing mobility and transportation industry."

During the certification program, which started Aug. 24, students are to be trained by ASE master certified instructors and will get an opportunity to participate in on-the-job paid internship training at Warren Henry's newest facility at 2300 NE 151 St. in North Miami Beach. Tuition is \$5,600, with financial aid assistance to those who qualify.

"This is a great opportunity for young adults to have a good income and career, who don't necessarily have the means to attend a four-year college or university," Mr. Day said.

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Last fall, Miami Dade College partnered with Tesla as the first institutional partner to launch its 15-week Tesla START automotive training program in the Southeastern US. The program trains students to become Tesla automotive technicians at a state-of-the-art facility that was constructed at the college's West Campus in Doral. For the first 12 weeks, students are trained at the college campus, and the remaining three weeks of the program they are taught by a Tesla instructor at one of its service centers.

"We prepare our students for the jobs of the future," said Antonio Delgado, dean of the School of Engineering, Technology and Design at MDC. "Our students in the Tesla START program are going to be ready and eligible for good-paying jobs once they finish."

Three cohorts of up to 16 students will graduate from the program each year. Students will receive a stipend from Tesla for the hours dedicated to the program. Financial aid and scholarships are also available for students who qualify.

"After completing the program, Tesla will collaborate with graduates to place them at Tesla Service Centers in Florida and other locations across the country," Mr. Delgado said.

With about 265 million vehicles currently on the road in the US, the automotive industry is going through a lot of changes as cars become computers on wheels, Mr. Day said. "This is why it's important people consider being an automotive technician as a potential career path."