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Maricopa Community Colleges Continue Automotive Industry Tradition

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Automotive instructors from three of the Maricopa Community Colleges that offer post-secondary degree and certificate automotive programs banded together to present the challenge, which replaces a similar competition co-hosted for 22 years by Ford Motor Company and AAA. The Auto Challenge will rotate between Mesa Community College (Southern and Dobson Friday, April 22, 2016), GateWay Community College (2017) and Glendale Community College (2018).

"In the past, automotive high school instructors relied on the Ford/AAA competition to showcase their top students in a hands-on experience," said Mesa Automotive Instructor Bryce Bond. "As of Sept. 1, 2015, the Ford/AAA competition was sadly ended, leaving a huge void.

"Historically Ford/AAA would offer employment," he added. "We will offer education through scholarships."

The high school and postsecondary Automotive Technology instructors see this as an opportunity to get students excited about the latest advances in the automotive technology field.

"Automotive technology changes rapidly and the Auto Challenge will give students a

real-life experience diagnosing and repairing vehicles using the most current technology,” said Steve Folks, GateWay Community College Automotive program director. “It also highlights the importance of encouraging talented young people to pursue Automotive Technology associate degrees and certificates, and careers as automotive service technicians.”

The Challenge qualifying exam will be administered online Jan. 27, 2016. It is formatted specifically to provide students the experience of sitting for the ASE (Automotive Service Excellence) certification tests, the industry standard. The top ten qualifying schools will send a team of two seniors and one alternate to Mesa Community College to participate in the on-site portion of the competition in April. During this portion of the Challenge students will demonstrate their automotive diagnosis and repair skills by fixing a “bugged” vehicle.

“With three well-respected automotive programs that focus on domestic and imported automotive technologies, manufacturer’s certifications and high levels of job placement, hosting the Auto Challenge aligns with our goal of encouraging students to pursue college degrees and certificates in this field,” said Glendale Community College Ford Asset Instructor Don Davis. “It’s a three-way win scenario: scholarships for students mean more trained, workforce-ready graduates who become contributing employees to the local economy.”

Additional information and the link to register for the exam may be found online at **mesacc.edu/autochallenge**

Awards, tools and scholarships will be presented to students during the event.

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GateWay Community College is a fully accredited public institution of higher

education located in Phoenix. Offering more than 125 certificate and associate degree programs in the areas of Business and Information Technology, Health Sciences, Industrial Technology, Nursing and University Transfer, GateWay has emerged as a leading institution to meet the needs of business and industry. Visit <http://www.gatewaycc.edu> or call 602-286-8000 for more information. The campus is located at 108 North 40th Street, Phoenix AZ 85034.

Glendale Community College offers innovative higher education curriculum in 111 associate degree, certificate, transfer, workforce development and career re-training programs. Glendale Community College is one of ten colleges in the Maricopa Community College District.

Mesa Community College is nationally recognized for its service-learning, civic engagement and innovative educational programs, which include university transfer career and technical, workforce development, and life-long learning. Host to 40,000 students annually, MCC offers more than 195 degrees and certificate programs at its two campuses and additional locations. MCC's student body hails predominantly from the East Valley of Phoenix and includes Veteran, American Indian and International students who enrich the learning experience. Award-winning faculty are dedicated to student success providing the education and training that empowers MCC students to compete locally and globally. Celebrating its 50th anniversary in 2015, MCC is one of 10 colleges that comprise the Maricopa County Community College District. The District also includes the Maricopa Corporate College and two skill centers. For additional information, visit mesacc.edu.

All community colleges are accredited by the Higher Learning Commission (HLC) <http://www.ncahlc.org>, 800-621-7440.

The Maricopa County Community College District is an EEO/AA institution and an equal opportunity employer of protected veterans and individuals with disabilities.

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