SPECIAL EDITION

Davison Community Schools

Building Beat

January 24, 2023

Quick FAQs

Q: What do students learn in Auto Technology I?

A: Students learn auto shop safety and use of basic auto technology equipment. Vehicle repair training will include a MLRNATEF- certified brake system's introduction to Engine Performance and Engine Repairs & Rebuilding.

Q: What is the focus in Auto Technology II?

A: Auto II focuses on the NATEF Certified study of "Electrical/Computer" systems and "Engine Fuel/ Emission Control" systems, along with "Steering Suspension" Systems.

Q: Can a student earn college credit for the completion of either Auto Technology I or II?

A: Yes! Students may earn articulated college credit through Mott Community College, Baker College, and the University of North Western Ohio

Davison Community Schools
Where Kids Come First and Futures Begin
Connections ✣ Curriculum ✣ Opportunities

ALL ABOUT AUTO



Tucked away in the back hallway of the Davison Alternative Education building, for many years the Auto Technology program has quietly put students on the fast track when it came to finding careers in the auto industry or learning enough of the basics to become backyard mechanics.

The program nearly stalled, however, when COVID-19 forced students to temporarily go online.

"Most of us are hands-on learners," said Auto Technology Instructor **Andrew Michalik.** "We want to do stuff and take things apart."

Thankfully, the program is once again roaring to life and has the accolades to prove it.

Midwest Regional Finalist–Top Four in the Country

In late fall, the Davison High School Auto Technology program was selected as the Midwest finalist in the "School of the Year" competition, sponsored by WIX Filters and O'Reilly Auto Parts. This is a national contest to find and name the best technician training school in the country.

"Although another program has been selected as the overall 2022 School of the Year, we were certainly impressed with your school's entry," said Doug Kaurman, editorial director for Babcox Media, which publishes Tomorrow's Tech.

As a finalist, the DHS Auto program received a $500 gift card from WiX and recognition on Tomorrow's Tech's website and newsletter.

In order to be considered for the School of the Year award, applicants had to include a video. Students from DTV, the high school television studio, produced this video about the Auto Tech program: https://youtu.be/QE2EIITnh3s

Graff Dealership Facilitates Large Donation for Lab

The Davison High School Auto Technology program was once again recognized in late fall, this time by local dealership owner Chris Graff of Hank Graff Chevrolet Davison, who visited the lab to drop off a $2,000 check from the Na-

tional Automobile Dealers Association (NADA).

“NADA contacted us to see how we could help our community with the grant,” Mr. Graff explained. “We have made donations to NADA in my grandfather’s name and they sometimes ask us how we can impact our community. That started the ball rolling.”

Michalik said the money will be used to purchase an electric vehicle service kit, which would include safety cones, gloves, face shield, a new 1,000-volt test meter, high voltage coat and special rubber insulated boots.

“In class we cover safety and first responder information, meaning how to shut a system down correctly to work on it or in an accident situation,” Michalik said. “We also talk about battery voltages and styles on the market. We cover some manufacturer information meaning what is Tesla doing compared to Ford, especially with hand-free, self-driving as well.”



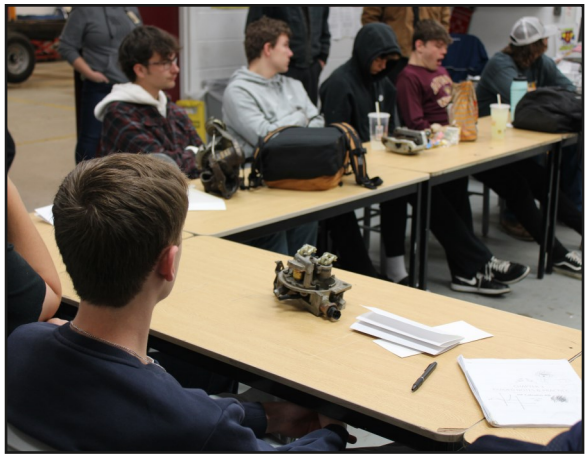
DHS Auto Technology Teacher Andy Michalik receives a $2,000 check on behalf of the National Automobile Dealers Association from Chris Graff of Graff Chevrolet Davison as Superintendent Keven Brown looks on.

In talking with students, Graff said he could envision his dealership increasing sales of electric cars to 40- and even possibly 50-percent of inventory within the next six to eight years.

“But this is purely conjecture on my part, of how I see manufacturers, the customers and what I read in news,” he added. “That’s my crystal ball reading.”

Changing Oil and Lives

Amid the high-pitched sounds of cordless impact wrenches and smells of gasoline and oil, there is something more idling here than engines in the Auto lab. It’s a sense of comradery, maybe even the feel of family.



“We are together two hours a day, five days a week, sometimes two to three years, so you really get to know each other,” said Michalik.

In addition to the two-hour block classes, Auto Technology students also meet outside the classroom. The DHS Auto Club has a drag racing car and students in the Off Road Club have modified an S-10 truck and Jeep Wrangler to take out to the Mounds ORV park in Genesee Township.

“We do allow the students to drive the cars,” Michalik said. “They can take the race car down the track and they can take the S-10 through a water hole.”

In addition to making friendships, students also have a serious supporter in Michalik, who has helped many stu-

dents find employment at local dealerships and shops. He and his lab assistant, **Miles Luebke**, also organize a Skills competition that takes place during the annual DHS Auto Car Show where students can win thousands in scholarships to technical universities. This year's Auto Show is planned for 5-8 p.m. Friday, May 19.

A CLOSER LOOK AT THE INSANE INSTRUCTOR

When Michalik is not in the classroom, you can still find him getting grease under his fingernails or behind the wheel of his monster truck, the Insane Instructor. It took him two years to build the truck, a tube chassis with a General Motors 468 cubic in-blown methanol injection engine, with help from his father, Mike, and brother, John, who teaches Auto classes at Ludington Schools.

"And, of course, my wife Deanna, sons, Drew and Bauer, and daughter, MaKenzie, also help with the day-to-day maintenance of the truck—along with all my auto students over the years," Michalik added.



Davison High School Auto Technology Teacher Andrew Michalik competes at the Eastern Michigan Fair in Imlay City over the summer.

The Insane Instructor has competed in Topeka, Kansas, and Dayton, Ohio, several times.

"I've also been in Alexandria, Louisiana, at the Coliseum, probably the coolest place," he said. "I also ran at Flint's Dort Federal Event Center along with a few county fairs like Eastern Michigan, Oakland and Ionia county fairs.

Michalik said his love for racing was inspired by his dad, Mike, and his uncle, Ron Michalik.

"I've raced against guys from all over the country," he said. "It's been a blast. Alan Piezo has helped us at shows. He owns the Predator race team and is a great guy. I've won numerous racing rounds; it was kind of my thing. I grew up drag racing with my dad and uncle."

Michalik has toyed with the idea of going after the speed record for a monster truck.

"Bad Habit currently holds the record of about 101 mph," he said. "It doesn't seem fast but it is in a 14-foot wide, 11-foot tall, 11 thousand pound truck!"

In the meantime, Michalik is staying busy building a lifted jeep Wrangler for his son and working on a 1966 Ford Thunderbird. Building a 1955 or 1956 Bel Air gasser set-up is also on his checklist of things to accomplish.

"I really appreciate Davison schools and my students and community who have showed so much support for the automotive program at the school and my students' futures in the field," Michalik said. "I'm very proud of what the students have gone on to accomplish."

Have an idea for Building Beat? We love to hear from our staff, students and alums! If you have a story or accomplishment to share, know of a student or staff member we should feature, or would like to let us know what you are doing since graduation, please email us at: medwards@davisonschools.org