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Sparkling Interest in High-Demand Automotive Careers



Milwaukee Public Schools

Can students step out of high school and into a lucrative, in-demand career? The answer is yes at Casimir Pulaski High School in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. Students at Pulaski have the option to pursue an automotive program that prepares them to work in auto shops or car dealerships or to continue their training in technical school.

Pulaski, which is part of Milwaukee Public Schools, has offered the automotive pathway for more than 30 years, and the program has grown to encompass three complete auto shops with two full-time teachers. For the 2022-23 school year, about 150 students are enrolled. By the time they graduate, many students receive ASE certification and most will go on to technical schools.

The high school automotive program is one of the largest in the state of Wisconsin and the only program in the city of Milwaukee. A key feature is certification by the Automotive Service Excellence Educational Foundation

(ASE), which sets high program standards, requires instructors to maintain ASE certification, and allows students to earn a credential.

At Pulaski, the pathway begins when students take a survey course. Beginning in the sophomore year, students can enroll in courses such as engine repair, suspension and steering, vehicle diagnosis, and auto servicing. Students learn to work with tools and technology for use with fuel injection, air induction, exhaust systems, emission controls, and more. ASE standards are followed for all instruction.

Luis Vallejo and Pablo Bras are the automotive teachers at Pulaski. Vallejo is a graduate of Pulaski who spent years working in the industry. His career came full circle when he left his employment and returned to Pulaski to teach. Bras was a Pulaski science teacher who altered his own pathway to teach auto body work.

“Students who enter automotive careers will always have a job,” said Vallejo, who has been an automotive teacher at Pulaski for more

than 10 years. “When you look at how many cars are on the road—they will all need repair at some point. The automotive industry just keeps getting more exciting as new technology comes along and then we train to work on these new innovations.”

Automotive training of this intensity would not be possible without local partners who serve as mentors and offer internships. A number of local dealers, professional associations, auto repair shops, and body shops are actively engaged to serve as guest speakers and volunteers. Partners also hire students as interns or youth apprentices.

An advisory board made up of community partners is essential to refining and adapting the program. Industry experts regularly review curriculum, skills, technology, and student outcomes to make recommendations and provide connections that keep pace with ongoing changes in the industry.

As a result of ongoing reviews of the automotive curriculum and classroom technol-

ogy, Pulaski recently added a body shop with a paint booth to expand the range of skills accessible to students.

Is the program a success? Hundreds of graduates have gone on to technical schools or have been hired directly after graduation. A number of students have honed their skills and opened their own neighborhood repair shops. Pulaski sees a significant number of students being hired as youth apprentices while in high school and then transitioning to full-time employment directly after they graduate.

“I love going to school every day,” said a Pulaski student. “I’m training for something I want to do for the rest of my life. The wages are great and I know I’m not following a dead end. I could not get this training anywhere else in the city except for Pulaski.”

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Beloit Memorial High School's Automotive Program is Racing Forward!



School District of Beloit

Beloit Memorial High School's automotive program is a NATEF certified program which focuses on technical skills and has a strong emphasis on the employability skills that our students need in order to be successful in the workforce, regardless of the career path that they choose. New instructor, Guy Olson is transforming a traditional automotive program into an industry-modeled learning program.

Beloit Memorial is a Wall-to-Wall Career Academy comprehensive high school. As part of the PACMES (Public Safety, Automotive, Advanced Manufacturing, Construction, and Engineering academy), the Automotive

pathway includes work-based learning opportunities such as job shadows, co-ops, and Youth Apprenticeship (YA). The following courses in the automotive sequence are open to all high school students in grades 9–12 and follow the 80/20 format of percent of time in the shop to time in the classroom:

Intro to Automotive Technology — an entry level course with an introduction to shop safety, shop operations, basic automotive repairs, and careers in the automotive industry

Automotive Technology 1, 2, and 3 — courses progress from fundamentals of modern day automotive technical servicing to advanced engine performance that

include work on fuel, emissions, heating and air conditioning, transmissions, steering, and suspension systems.

Dual credit options are currently available through the local technical college and are in the developing stages with a technical institute and other local technical colleges. Multiple industry certifications are also available as students progress through our Auto Technology sequence, including ASE Entry Level certifications and Snap-On Scanner certifications. Increased high school to college avenues and professional certification opportunities for students are currently in the development stage.

The successful completion of the three Auto Technology courses will prepare students

them.” While we have good student enrollment numbers already, Guy is working to build the level of interest in this field whereby we fill classes to capacity. “I’d like there to be a waiting list of interested students in the future” he stated.

The facility is first-class, with eight full size service bays, an adjoining classroom, and demonstration learning room. Since the fall of 2007 our automotive shop has occupied the former Sears Automotive Center in the Eclipse Center (former mall). We are fortunate to be able to lease this classroom space from the property management company. The Automotive Center is located directly across the Rock River from the Beloit Memorial High School making it accessible to any student taking these courses.



for an entry-level automotive technician position. 10th grader Ash C. stated, “My plan is to take all four classes, earn certification, and then try to get a job at a dealership.”

In addition to skill development in automotive repairs on vehicles that serve as learning modules, our instructor, Guy Olsen, operates the program as a fully functional automotive shop; every student isn’t going to become a mechanic but may still be in the automotive field. Students learn workforce skills starting with a Point of Purchase and Service Area where they create work orders, order parts, schedule and confirm service appointments, track progress, complete and organize work order documentation, and demonstrate customer service skills as they work with customers from the drop-off to pick-up of the customer vehicle. This provides real-life learning opportunities that prepare the students for multiple jobs in the automotive repair industry.

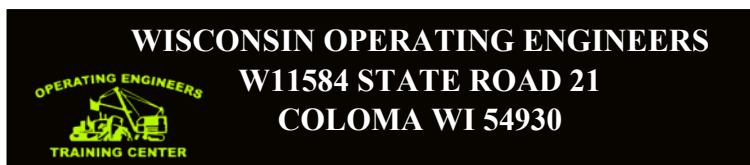
Carlos A., a 12th grader in Auto Technology 1, states that “*This provides REAL hands-on experience of what it is like to work in a shop. We interact with the customers with the whole process of ordering parts, working on their vehicle, and then delivering it to*

It is an impressive facility by any standards!

Recent updates within the program include a new tire balancer, new tire mounting machine as well as vehicle diagnostic scanners. Planned for the start of the 2023-24 school year is a top of the line Snap-On Zues diagnostic scanner that has intelligent diagnostics to interface with diagnostic scanners in the industry through a nationwide network. The scanner also has bluetooth capabilities so the diagnostic readings can be projected onto a classroom screen so each student is involved in the learning experience.

Future plans include painting the shop and creating videos that brand our program BMHS Motor Sports and also showcasing the many opportunities our program offers. In looking for ways to continually build the program, Guy is looking to add electric vehicle service and a drag racing club (he is a drag racer in his spare time) where students would work on the drag cars during the school year and be a part of a drag racing team crew in the summer.

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Wausau East Transportation Program Expands to Include More Dual Credit



*Diana White, Coordinator of Communications & Marketing
Jon Winter, LVEC/CTE Coordinator
Wausau School District*

Wausau East High School, located within the Wausau School District, is home to an 8,000-square foot automotive shop that gives students, 130 to 150 on average per year, the opportunity to learn all three career areas within the transportation pathway: Auto Technicians, Auto Collision, and Diesel Mechanics.

The shop, built after the passing of a community-wide referendum in 2015, features three two-point hoists, two four-point hoists, one heavy duty four-post hoist for semi/diesel, a low rise hoist for auto collision, a paint booth and paint mixing room, as well as, new state-of-the-art wheel alignment equipment, a tire balancer, and an attached classroom. It also has its own semi truck that students can work on.

Students are able to take a wide variety of courses including an Introduction to Diesel class, which they can actually receive dual credit for through a partnership with a nearby technical college.

What makes this opportunity unique, in particular, is that the college's diesel instructor meets virtually with students every Tuesday. Then, the instructor makes it a point to actually

visit Wausau East High School to work with students in the class on trucks. In addition, once a year, students actually get to travel to train in the college's facility. It's the hands-on opportunities and lessons that mean the world to students.

"It's been a neat deal. It's been very well received. It's a way for the students to get another instructor's perspective with this and interact with a real live college instructor. The kids are getting a lot more with this than just a regular dual credit class," said Mark Poppe, Wausau East Automotive Teacher.

Students are able to get 4 credits through the class.

The Wausau East Automotive Program also works closely with another local technical college to make dual credit opportunities in other courses available to students. It's these partnerships with local colleges that truly help the Wausau School District prepare students for life after high school.

Other classes available to students in the Wausau East Automotive Shop include:

- **Introduction to Power Mechanics:** This course is designed for students who are interested in exploring the internal combustion engine as well as basic professional shop procedures/tasks. During this class students will explore basic tools,

measurement, and engine theory of operation/construction. Student experiences will include: engine rebuilding, troubleshooting and two and four-cycle engine theory. Students should expect to spend the majority of their time in the lab.

- **Auto Awareness:** This course covers basic systems of the automobile. Units of instruction include: tools, auto products, ignition, fuel, electrical, cooling, general maintenance, interior/exterior care, and new/used car purchasing. This course provides a theory of operation and practical lab experiences for the automobile owner.

- **Occupational Mechanics I:** Introduction to the automotive service industry including safety and the use of basic hand and power tools to help the prospective automobile technician work safely and efficiently. Students will learn to perform basic under-hood and under-car services including: Basic Maintenance, Steering, Suspension, Brakes, and Tune-up. This course is based on hands-on lab activities supported by classroom operational theory of automotive systems. The students will have the opportunity to work on their own vehicle repairs. Additionally, students will be introduced to the basics of autobody/collision repair as well as painting. Students who successfully complete this course will receive dual credit through a technical college.

- **Occupational Mechanics II:** This class is a continuation of Occupational Mechanics I. The course develops entry level skills/competencies in the following ASE (National Institute for Automotive Service Excellence) areas: Suspension & Steering, Brakes, Electrical/Electronic Systems, and Engine Performance. Time will be spent both in class and at the jobsite (where applicable). In the lab and at the jobsite (where applicable) students will gain hands-on experience with state-of-the-art tools and large-scale diagnostic/repair equipment, develop employability skills and spend time developing a good resume. Lab work will be performed mainly on late model donated vehicles; however, students will have the opportunity to work on their own vehicle repairs. Students who successfully complete this course will receive dual credit through a technical college.

- **Auto Academy (off campus):** Students who successfully complete the prerequi-

site transportation classes may be eligible to participate in the local college's Auto Academy during their senior year of high school. Academy coursework will be taught on campus, at the college, by their instructors. The Auto Academy will prepare students to be workforce-ready through Youth Apprenticeship at area businesses, and they will earn an Automotive Maintenance & Light Repair Technical Diploma. All credits (a tuition value of \$1,800) transfer to the college's associate degrees or technical diplomas, so students will have a jump start to continue their education after high school.

- **Youth Apprenticeship — Transportation:** Students have the opportunity to jump-start their careers by enrolling in Youth Apprenticeship (YA) where they earn credit while working on the job. YA placements are available in auto mechanics, diesel or auto body and collision.



Students are matched with a mentor that teaches them all aspects of the business while earning a paycheck and elective credit.

While students can work on their own vehicles in the automotive shop, they can also work on 'customer vehicles' that are dropped off at the beginning of the day. Students diagnose them, develop quotes, order parts, install the parts and repair, and help with billing. All experiences that still set them up for success after high school.

"This automotive facility at Wausau East is a shining example of what happens when administration, businesses, and community members are all pulling in the same direction. This is truly a win-win scenario in our community and our school district," said Poppe.

All of which align to the Wausau School District's mission of advancing student learning, achievement, and success.





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Auto Opportunities Abound in the AASD



Appleton Area School District

It's the start of the school day in the auto bay at Appleton East High School and students are already hunched over a snowblower, muttering about the carburetor.

A few other students are peering up with flashlights at the chassis of an SUV suspended on a lift.

Another student is watching a tutorial video while using a socket wrench to remove the inside door panel of a sedan.

This class, Auto Mechanics, focuses on developing skills in professionalism, safety, and the use of basic power tools. Students are introduced to the Automotive Service Industry and learn to use both comprehensive and

manufacturer's service information to perform vehicle maintenance in 9 Automotive Service Excellence (ASE) areas.

All of these high school students are learning with professional tools on actual vehicles with real problems.

Auto Mechanics is also a dual credit class and provides the students with nine post-secondary credits. This allows our students to earn high school credit and technical college credit at the same time.

Auto Mechanics is one of two dual credit options within the Transportation, Distribution & Logistics Career Cluster at Appleton East. Dual credit classes give students affordable access to rigorous college courses and help them get a jumpstart on their college degrees. Around 95% of our Auto Mechanics students go directly onto college for further schooling after graduation.

AASD students can also learn more about careers in transportation through Youth Apprenticeship (YA) opportunities. YA integrates school-based and work-based learning to instruct students in employability and occupational skills defined by Wisconsin industries.

Students are simultaneously enrolled in academic classes to meet high school graduation

requirements, in a youth apprenticeship-related instruction class, and are employed by a participating employer under the supervision of a skilled mentor.

The AASD works with area businesses to place students in relevant Youth Apprenticeship opportunities. Students are able to spend sustained time in one focused area that allows them to see different facets of the industry and relevant careers. Students can not only earn credits but they'll also have confidence in whether a career in Transportation, Distribution, and Logistics is for them.

Other classes offered range from Small Engines & Transportation, which is designed for the student who wants to learn the proper and safe use of hand and power tools to efficiently repair, troubleshoot, and rebuild small engines; to Auto ABC's which provides students with the knowledge to make economical decisions and take preventive measures to enhance the overall satisfaction of being an automotive consumer.

The AASD offers a Transportation, Distribution, and Logistics pathway that gives students real-world, interactive education using



professional-level tools in advanced surroundings. Along with classes, dual credit options, and Youth Apprenticeship, students can take advantage of opportunities through CTE Internships, Job Shadows, Mentorships, and Launch events.

Launch events are lunch and learn style events that allow students to visit 1-3 local companies and take a deeper dive into careers connected to their identified career cluster(s). These events are designed to be experiential with a focus on real people at real companies talking about their career paths.

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Holmen Auto Service Providing Hands-On Learning

Travis Judell, Communications Specialist
School District of Holmen

It's the start of another school day inside Holmen High School, and a few students of Ryan Ziegler's Auto Service 1 class are already hard at work helping a teacher whose tire is leaking while others spend time hunched under the hood testing car batteries.

Technology Education teacher Ryan Ziegler is in his 21st year teaching, and he says this type of hands-on learning helps prepare students for the real world, "The students love hands-on learning," said Ziegler. "They can repeat the process until they can complete the task with little to no help from the instructor. It is awesome to see the students complete a task they thought was impossible on their own."

As the weather turns colder, students in the class are working on a battery testing lab. The students are learning how to load test a battery, measure parasitic drain, remove corrosion, and check physical connections to ensure a working battery. "The students walk away with a solid understanding of the basic automotive systems," says Ziegler. "All of the students learn how to maintain their own vehicle."

Another group of students is helping out a Holmen High School teacher whose tire has

a slow leak. To find the leak, students have to put their problem-solving skills to the test. "The most important thing I would like them to take away is the problem-solving ability. Use the problem-solving process to simplify the problem and quickly come up with a viable solution," says Ziegler as the students dip the tire in a dunk tank to locate the leak. Finding no visible leak, Mr. Ziegler uses this as a teaching moment for his class about snow tires and how to communicate with customers. "Throughout the course sequence, students will learn how to communicate with customers and coworkers. Some of that communication is done by the use of industry software. Another way is teaching the students how to listen to customer concerns actively," says Ziegler.

Auto Service 1 is a semester course of 85 minutes daily, mainly consisting of juniors and seniors. These high school students are learning with professional tools on actual vehicles with real problems. Auto Service is also a dual credit class and provides students with three post-secondary credits. This allows our students to earn high school and technical college credit simultaneously and receive their Auto Service Excellence (ASE) certification at the completion of the course.

In this class, students get to learn about these systems by repairing and diagnosing issues:



- **Wheel systems and tires:** mount and balance tires, tire puncture repair, tire rotation
- **Brakes and ABS system:** replacing brake pads, measuring thickness, bleeding brake lines, diagnosing ABS sensors
- **Preventative maintenance fluid:** completing checklists, fluid flush, and exchanges, customer concerns
- **Charging and starting system:** measuring voltage drops and amperage outputs
- **Ignition system:** replacing ignition wires, coils, and plugs
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- **Fuel system:** fuel volume and pressure tests, fuel filter replacement

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Yes We Can! D.C. Everest Student Finding Success in Apprenticeship



*Michelle Rothmeyer
Coordinator of Communications
D.C. Everest Area School District*

Stephanie Stanke, a lifelong automotive enthusiast, opened Wooster's Garage in 2017 becoming one of very few female automotive repair shop owners in the region. She grew up in a family of auto enthusiasts/auto shop owners, and in high school enrolled in automotive courses. Upon graduating, she set out to learn everything she could about the industry and the customers it serves, by working in a wide variety of roles within the automotive industry. In 2012 she rounded out her experiences by earning an associate's degree in Automotive Technology.

What struck Stephanie during her years of working within the industry was the level of trepidation customers felt concerning the repairs and services completed on their vehicles. She set out to change that when she established her own business. To bridge the gap between customers and technicians the shop works diligently to make customers feel comfortable about what they are investing in and driving — offering, for example, monthly auto clinics to help customers better understand their vehicles. She's also working on a book based on the insights she's gained at her customer auto clinics. Further, she serves as a role model for other female entrepreneurs, serving as a guest speaker who addresses what it's like to work within a male-dominated field.

When D.C. Everest Community Partnership Coordinator Rose Matthie met Harmony Hommerding, a sophomore at D.C. Everest Senior High with a marked interest in cars, she immediately thought of Stephanie's business as an ideal Youth Apprenticeship partner. Harmony's interest in the automotive industry was piqued by mutual friends who had a love of cars and the history behind the car culture. Similar to Stephanie, Harmony is pursuing her automotive interest by enrolling in Automotive Technology career track courses. She enrolled

in Consumer Care Care as a sophomore and then Automotive Power Train Systems, Small Engines, and Introduction to Welding and Machining for her junior year. The DCE Senior High's new six-bay Automotive Lab has provided her with unique hands-on learning opportunities, but Harmony sought to expand her horizons and gain insights into how an automotive shop runs as a Youth Apprentice.

As an apprentice, Harmony has the opportunity to be mentored by professionals, earn an income, learn skills that transfer to the classroom (and vice versa), and develop relationships within her area of interest. Harmony performs oil changes, removes and replaces brake pads and rotors, and is learning to inspect and diagnose vehicle problems. The latter, she notes, "matters because customer trust and safety are number one. Customers are like family in a way — you want to make sure you're not missing anything and you're performing great work. Most people don't realize the importance of maintenance and repair and the overall effect it can have on how the vehicle runs and its efficiency."

The opportunity to learn within a shop environment has clearly had a positive impact on Harmony. "This is a chance to learn hands-on, which is easier for me to grasp versus just reading about it. The concepts really stick," she states. The breadth of what she can learn also has been one of the biggest surprises of the experience thus far. "There is always more you can learn from being a part of the automotive industry from repair and maintenance to performance and ability. Having experienced workplace mentors like Joe and Steph makes it very helpful," she adds.

According to Stephanie, Harmony's professional curiosity is an asset. "Harmony has always been eager to learn, participate, and provide her own ideas to the business. She has a positive attitude and works extremely hard to learn about all of the different positions here. She is always willing to move around and help

others, to identify room for improvement and is overall a great member of the team." Further, Harmony's enthusiasm has helped Wooster's "expand on and grow our overall training procedures. We have adapted to provide even further 'in house' hands-on training that will better set up the future of our workforce." We utilize team members' ideas and feedback to improve the business, therefore Harmony is a good fit for the automotive shop. As Stephanie notes, "Harmony is extremely motivated and always brings new ideas to the table."

Just as importantly, Harmony is developing critical "soft skills" — customer service and professional collaboration, for example. "Youth Apprentices are provided the opportunity to have a unique experience blending their education and real-world practice for their potential future careers. Students work on communication skills, employability, trade skills and more while becoming active members of the workforce," notes Stephanie. "Harmony gets along well with customers and coworkers while pushing herself to learn new things. We are thrilled to have her as part of our team."

Both Harmony and Stephanie recognize the importance of building professional relationships as part of the apprenticeship experience as well. Looking ahead, Harmony is exploring the idea of pursuing a degree in the Automotive Technology field where she can capitalize on the dual enrollment credits she has earned and her apprenticeship experience. "The Youth Apprenticeship program is giving me a jump start on my career not only by helping me learn specific skills, but by meeting people in the industry." Adds Stephanie, "The program provides an opportunity for both the business and the apprentice to expand their knowledge, create long term relationships, and provide products and services to their customers while developing the skills of the next generations in their industry."

Of course, apprentices also face — and overcome — challenges. For Harmony, one of those challenges has been patience. "You can't rush into something you don't have experience with. I need to slow down, think critically, ask questions and listen so I can remember new things and understand the details of the customers' concerns and the technicians' instructions." Another is that the automotive industry, and classrooms, tend to be dominated by males. "The gender stereotype in the automotive industry forces females to 'be more, to be equal' — you need to have more knowledge to prove you are equal," observes Harmony. And, she adds, "having less physical strength as a female can also be a challenge at times.

Knowing how to improvise and use different tools can be a benefit." Ultimately, she has learned that perseverance pays off. The most rewarding aspect thus far has been "completing a job by myself and feeling the pride of learning new things and being able to help others. The work experience is a good challenge every time and it's nice to make the connection between what I'm learning at school with what I do in the workplace."

Stephanie is eager to continue helping young students explore career opportunities. "It's a great way for us to work within the community to not only offer employment opportunities for students but to set them up for their future careers." Harmony's eagerness, curiosity, and professionalism also have had a positive impact on Wooster's. "Students like Harmony love to learn new things every day in a field that they already have interest in. We are now focusing even more on expanding our ability to help more interested students like her."

When asked what she would say to other businesses considering Youth Apprenticeship opportunities, Stephanie was quick to note that an apprenticeship program not only enhances a student's education and work experiences, it provides "businesses or organizations with quality candidates who are currently interested in that line of work. The exposure to those work environments and ability for the students to find the type of employment they enjoy creates a unique advantage for the workforce. I would recommend any business or organization considering apprenticeship opportunities to invest their time in those programs and see the potential within these students."

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- Logistics Coordinator Jobs
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- Materials Control Manager
- Materials Handler
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- Materials Planner
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- Motor Racer
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- Sailor
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- Top Inventory Control Executive
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- Traffic Clerk
- Traffic Director
- Traffic Manager
- Traffic Supervisor



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Please note: This represents a broad and not conclusive list of careers within the world of transportation

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Melrose-Mindoro Makes Auto Racing History



The High School Racing Association is making it possible for high school students to compete in the sport of stock car auto racing at race tracks across Wisconsin.

One Wisconsin high school made history ahead of the 2022 summer racing season by becoming the first high school in the nation to make auto racing a sport students could letter in. Melrose-Mindoro High School in Melrose approved the opportunity for their student racers to receive athletic letters by racing in the HSRA series to better recognize the accomplishments and time commitment of auto racing student athletes.

“This is a big deal for the sport of auto racing,” said Jonathan Eckelberg, director of the High School Racing Association. “This is a sport where students are learning so many different life and technical skills. Not only are they learning the maintenance side of their race car, but they’re getting the chance to do media interviews both at the track and otherwise, talk with fans and other competitors about racing and pitch themselves to potential sponsors.”

Eckelberg raced for 17 years himself, retiring from NASCAR late model racing at La Crosse Speedway in 2022.

With more and more schools having rodeo, trap, figure skating and more as school-supported sports, Eckelberg asks why not auto racing too?

Official high school athletic recognition is important to college applicants, and while a school’s main concerns often are the funding aspect and concern for safety in auto racing, HSRA has taken steps to address those concerns.

The HSRA racing division features American production six-cylinder sedans with various safety enhancements. Racers must install a roll cage, driver’s door plate, window net in addition to wearing helmets and the necessary racing attire. Safety requirements are taken seriously in the sport of racing.

Drivers and pit crew members also sign a waiver at each racetrack and run under the track’s insurance. The school is not liable for any injuries.

“We saw a lot of growth this race season for the series,” Eckelberg said. “We added a new track to the schedule; we saw an increase in drivers; new scholarships and sponsors have come forward, and we have a high school offering auto racing as a letterable sport.”



One of the biggest barriers to entry with getting young talent into auto racing is the cost investment. HSRA is striving to give students an economical way to break into the sport. Through low race track admission costs, scholarships, comped meals and gift cards, the organization can offset some of the costs that these racers incur. Racers are not paid a monetary purse for competition in order to keep them at an amateur athlete status.

There are no required costs or funds necessary for schools to provide. Schools can be as involved as they want to be. For Melrose-Mindoro, the only funds needed is for the cost to print the letters and MECA pins for

finishing second and third respectively.

Student racers compete against other racers from Wisconsin, Illinois and Minnesota for the season championship. More race tracks are planning to be added to the HSRA schedule for the 2023 season.

Students are eligible to compete in HSRA if entering their freshman year of high school, currently in high school as well as during the race season immediately following their graduation. The minimum age for racers is 14 and maximum age is 19 to be eligible to compete in HSRA. A complete set of rules and regulations can be found on the official HSRA website (highschoolracing.org).



the letterman jackets. The school doesn't have to sponsor any races; they do NOT have to hire any event workers or officials; and there is no need for equipment to be purchased. The student uses their own money to build a race car.

Suggested lettering criteria for HSRA racers includes:

- Good sportsmanship- no intentional wrecking of other drivers, no fighting, no taunting, etc.
- Racers must start a minimum of four HSRA features for the season.
- Must be in good academic standing.
- They must have their school colors on the car.

Per the HSRA rules, the racers must incorporate their school name, logo and/or colors into the look of their race car. This means the drivers are already representing their school. All racers are also competing for school points in addition to individual points. In 2022, Melrose-Mindoro High School finished first in the school championship, with Royall High School in Elroy and Onalaska High School in Onalaska



Questions and inquiries can be directed to the HSRA Director, Jonathan Eckelberg, at jon@highschoolracing.org or 608.769.3903.

www.mel-min.k12.wi.us



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Horlick High School Students Learning All About Aviation from Former Pilot, Air Force Crew Chief



*Jonalee Kuhn
Communications Manager
Racine Unified School District*

Students at Horlick High School in Racine are prepared for takeoff thanks to a pretty fly program. The Aviation Academy at Horlick first took flight six years ago and has been logging miles, routing its next course and preparing the pilots of the future ever since.

Six years ago, RUSD Educator and Former Air Force Crew Chief James Bucholtz worked within the Academies of Racine at Horlick High School to build the aviation program from the ground up with a goal of increasing interest in the field. Today, he and fellow aviation instructor Robby Collum, a former pilot, teach aviation nomenclature, principles of flight, aircraft components and systems, aviation

maintenance and mechanics and drones. Students are given the opportunity to do hands-on projects like build the leading edge of a wing out of aluminum, do engine tear downs, work on flight simulators and even focus on the Part 107 test to become certified remote pilots.

“What I was able to go through in college, they’re able to do this at the high school level so that is giving them a head start on what they possibly would like to do in the future,” said Collum.

Horlick senior Jacob Thillemann recently became the first RUSD aviation student to earn a Drone Pilot’s License. The school just launched the drone program in the fall of 2021 after recognizing the endless career opportunities that await drone operators. From delivery companies to surveying, Jacob will have plenty



of well-paying, in-demand positions to explore after graduation.

Ultimately, that’s the goal of this aviation program — to connect what these students are learning in the classroom to real world opportunities that await them.

“Our company became involved with the Academies four years ago when the Aviation Pathway was utilizing a portion of our hangar. We met Horlick Instructor James Bucholtz and began brainstorming ways to partner on combining education and real-life work experience,” said Lisa Booker, the HR Director for a local aircraft engine manufacturer based in Racine.

“Over the course of the last four years, we have strengthened our relationship with the program through offering paid jobs after school to several students. The goal is to prepare students by giving them the opportunity to work with many departments and people within the company’s organization to help them find their niche.”

The company employs 55 people and two of them are recent RUSD graduates who were youth apprentices there during high school. In addition, they cur-

rently have three youth apprentices from the Aviation Pathway at the Academies of Racine–Horlick.

Just down the street, an international airport hosts another youth apprentice from Horlick’s Aviation Pathway.

“It’s cool just to work with planes up close,” said Lance Horvath. “We have a pretty big job here. We wear a lot of hats and no day is ever the same. It’s a little bit more hands on than other places.”

Bucholtz and Collum also work to expose the students to as many different career opportunities as they can. This year, despite the pandemic, aviation students had opportunities to check out Flight for Life helicopters, go behind the scenes of a world-renowned delivery giant’s flight operations and speak with the company’s pilots, and even hop aboard a luxurious private jet at the airport. Where will the aviation program take them next? The sky is the limit.

www.rusd.org

Holmen Auto Service Continued from Page 9



In addition to Auto Service I, these hands-on automotive courses are also offered at Holmen High School:

- **Home and Auto:** Consumer-based course focused on owning and buying houses and vehicles. The students learn basic maintenance, finance, inspections, and the buying process.
- **Basic Auto:** The students learn automotive terminology, basic tool, and equipment safety, and each automotive

system’s basic parts and functions.

- **Auto Service II:** Eligible for for 3 credits at the local technical college. This course is all about advanced systems and diagnostics. They will learn about: shocks/struts, transmissions, engine performance, drive train, and shop simulation.

www.holmen.k12.wi.us

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WB West Bend's Automotive Program Has Something For All



*Nancy Kunkler
Communications Manager
West Bend School District*

At West Bend East and West High Schools (located in the same building in West Bend, Wisconsin) the automotive program offers three courses ranging from beginner to advanced. Introduction to Automotive Technology covers a broad range of areas of the automotive industry from basic spare tire changes, oil changes, vehicle maintenance aspects, purchasing a vehicle, and owning a vehicle. The second level class is Automotive Technology and digs much deeper into the systems of a vehicle: oil, cooling, starting, charging, suspension, and alignments.

For students who are serious about a career or hobby in the automotive industry, East and West High Schools offer Advanced

Automotive Technology. This course covers engine and drivetrain repair and diagnostics. In fact, students spend a great deal of time learning how to diagnose a vehicle and then do the repairs. Students are also expected to play a role in the management of the automotive shop by using computers equipped with professional grade shop management software.

East and West automotive teacher Gerald Sorce says, "We work closely with technical colleges and dealerships to do our very best to prepare our students for what a career in this field will look like when they graduate from high school."

Students can earn transcribed credit at the local technical college for the Advanced Automotive Technology class. In addition, students also get ASE certified upon completion of the class, which means they have completed an automotive repair training

program and tests to ensure they know how to work on mechanical, electrical, and other automotive systems.

Local connections help the program provide hands-on training and expertise. Says Sorce, "We partner with two West Bend automotive dealerships as well as a speed and performance shop, on various projects or to help with testing in the after-market automotive world."

The youth apprenticeship available to East and West students—Transportation, Distribution, and Logistics—is a one or two-year program for 11th and 12th grade

using what they had learned in their West Bend East and West High Schools automotive classes. Vallone and his classmates installed a new engine and replaced the suspension and brakes in the Mercedes, among other updates. The skills Vallone learned in his West Bend West classes helped him when he teamed with classmate Brandon Reichardt to take fourth place in the final hands-on portion of the Automotive Dealers Association of Mega Milwaukee Technicians of Tomorrow Competition in March 2022. This was the fifth time in the last six years that students from East and West have



students that integrates school-based and work-based learning to instruct students in employability and occupational skills defined by Wisconsin industries. Students are employed by a participating employer under the supervision of a skilled mentor and receive training based on statewide youth apprenticeship curriculum guidelines. Upon successful completion of the one- or two-year program, students gain technical college credit and a state certificate of occupational proficiency.

John Vallone, a 2022 graduate of West Bend West High School, purchased a clean but worn out 1984 Mercedes 190e knowing that he and his classmates could restore it

qualified for this state competition. More than 75 schools entered the written test in 2022 and only six were selected to compete in the hands-on competition at the Greater Milwaukee Auto Show.

"The West Bend East and West High Schools automotive program covers a wide range; it can help students who want to learn how to take care of the basics of their car or go up to providing the training to enter into a great career," explains Sorce.

www.west-bend.k12.wi.us

Freedom High School Automotive



The Freedom High School Automotive program came to life in 1972 under the guidance of Bob Abitz, who built the program over an outstanding 35 year career. Over the years this program has grown into one of the most renowned and accredited programs in the state and even the nation. Current instructor, Bob's son, Jay Abitz has taken the program to the next level by introducing new curriculum, teaching practices, tools and technology and continuing the grow the program.

"I love to show my students that cars can be a career or even a hobby. I love seeing the confidence in their abilities grow and the rewards they reap from a job well done."

This prizewinning automotive program hosts its own annual car show for the community with over 150 cars, trucks, and motorcycles. At the show, Freedom automotive students give tours of their facility and share what they learn in Abitz's program. The show is typically attended by more than 500 people.

"At our show students will also give tours of our facility where people really get a chance to see what they are learning. Students show the tools, materials, and equipment they use and explain the learning process along the way. Visitors are always impressed and leave wishing they had this opportunity in high school," Abitz said.

Freedom's after-school auto club program brings together a number of volunteers from industry that work directly with students on cars. There are master certified mechanics, shop managers, welders, fabricators and many other volunteers who join at different times throughout each car repair.

"These volunteers have taught me a number of things over the years as well and grown my skill set and knowledge base. Being in the classroom for a living I do not get the same experiences as working in a shop, so we need the people I describe to keep us in touch with what is going on in the industry," Abitz said. "Many of these volunteers are also FHS alumni, eager to give back to the program that gave them their start. It is so cool to see former students come back and share what they have learned out in the world, and as their teacher it is awesome to see how they have grown."

FHS is well known for its success through the SkillsUSA (formerly VICA) collision repair contest with 26 state champions (state record) and multiple finishes inside the top 10 at nationals

including 3rd (Nick Heiptas 03) and 2nd (Brian Vanderheiden 19). In 2021 Luc Murphy made history becoming the first national champion for Freedom and the state of Wisconsin in the high school division! One of the things that make the FHS automotive program special is the focus on collision repair. Since 1972 FHS has taught collision repair techniques such as panel replacement, metal working, welding, plastic repair, cosmetic repair, and refinishing. Students also experience restoration and custom work emphasizing skills like metal and composite fabrication, rust repair, and custom painting and refinishing. It is the goal of the automotive program to expose students to a variety of hands-on experiences to prepare them for a career in the automotive industry or personal vehicle maintenance and repair. Students use a variety of current industry standard repair techniques, tools, and materials to complete repairs on vehicles. FHS is always looking for ways to improve student education and achievement through partnerships with organizations, industry partners, and post-secondary schools and has been well supported by the community for many years.

His students' work has been featured in numerous automotive publications including Popular Mechanics. Abitz's students explore

Continued on Page 18

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Automotive Program at Arrowhead Union High School



The Technology and Engineering curriculum at Arrowhead High School, located in Hartland, Wisconsin, provides a comprehensive study in technology, engineering, manufacturing, and automotive with emphasis on skill development and career exploration.

For over 40 years, the Automotive Program at Arrowhead has been a constant. Stable, with several periods of growth. Arrowhead has become an accredited school through the National Automotive Technicians Education Foundation (NATEF) as well as the Automotive Youth Education Systems (AYES). Both associations provide graduates job opportunities, scholarships, free tools, and advanced placement at two local colleges.

The Auto's area is housed in two different major locations; a classroom where students learn about vehicle systems and the more technical side of the content, and then

a much larger lab area where students apply the knowledge they have gained by working on Shop vehicles or even their own vehicles if so desired. Both classroom and lab are housed in the school and are directly connected so students can gather direction and information in the classroom and walk right out into the shop and get to work on whatever the task at hand is.

Each class typically runs with 6 groups. Each group has a basic toolbox dedicated to them that they can roll around the shop in order to have access to the basic hand tools they use on a day-to-day basis. Students also have access to 6 car lifts, two tire change machines (one of which is only 1 year old), a 1-year-old tire balancer and two larger tool boxes full of more specialty tools. They also have anywhere between 6-8 "Shop-cars" that stay on school grounds at all times, that students can use if they do not have their own vehicle they wish to work on.



The program is offered to our juniors and seniors, primarily because of other opportunities and facilities available. There are 4 automotive classes. Students can start with Consumer Autos (geared towards students who really want skills to do their own car maintenance) or Auto Tech I (geared towards students who are interested in working in the automotive industry). Auto II is the next level class that takes a deeper look at careers and skill sets that are valuable for those looking at becoming an auto-technician.

The capstone class is Advanced Autos which is a yearlong course in which students are doing more independent problem solving of complex systems. Currently there is an Advanced Automotive student that is working to remove and replace the entire engine and transmission on a vehicle, and they are doing this with minimal guidance from the instructor. They are using a service repair manual and their own prior knowledge and problem-solving skills to accomplish this task.

The Automotive Program at Arrowhead High School places a very high value on developing employability skills. The experiences in the lab area are designed to nurture the development of technical auto skills in the curriculum as well as employability skills

such as communication, time management, responsibility. Through various strategies, such as job sheets, students receive feedback on such skills and its part of their grade.

Students also have the option to participate in an Autos Youth Apprenticeship Program. This is a 1 or 2 year program where students work in the industry on specific competencies while being supported by a mentor on the job and related coursework at school. Students work 450 hours per year while in the program. This program is for those students serious about their future plans and willing to be released from school to gain work experience in a professional environment.

Arrowhead high school is a superb place to learn and work as a direct result of our people and programming. The staff members are a hard-working, caring team of professionals who are dedicated to continuous improvement and success at north and south campuses, in all departments, and in all classrooms.

Information courtesy of Brenda King and Michael Wesp, CTE Program, Arrowhead Union High School

www.arrowheadschoools.org

Freedom High School Automotive

Continued from Page 17



careers in a variety of trades with 100 percent entering the workforce, post-secondary education or the military upon graduation. Jay won \$50,000 from the Harbor Freight Tools for Schools Program in 2021 and was a finalist for the 2020 prize.

"In my classes students are challenged, they struggle, they are required to figure it out on their own. I give them experiences that will relate to the real world and teach skills like problem solving, working independently and as a team, and breaking down complex tasks for step-by-step completion. My class can frustrate

them, seem like work, and can be rewarding at the same time. Life and school is not about what they learn on any given day, but is all about the experiences! I do my best to prepare them for life after high school to be successful people and good employees."

Article Courtesy of Harbor Freight Tools for Schools, the Post Crescent, and Freedom High School.

freedomschools.k12.wi.us

E City Stadium Automotive

Green Bay Area Public School District

On May 25th, the Green Bay Area Public School District and East High School were proud to celebrate eight students in the City Stadium Automotive® program who will graduate with 26 or more college credits and a one-year technical diploma, all while in high school. To honor their hard work and dedication to their future, the students received a certificate of achievement during a ceremony at East High School.

The automotive industry in the United States and Wisconsin is forecasted to remain a growing industry. Recognizing the need for a skilled automotive workforce, the Green Bay Area Public School District (GBAPS) expanded the automotive technician lab at Green Bay East High School in 2015 to form City Stadium Automotive®.

Students enrolled in City Stadium Automotive® focus on the diagnosis and troubleshooting of faults in automotive systems while receiving high school and college credit through the local technical college. They also have the opportunity to work at major dealerships while still enrolled in high school. The hands-on, real-world experience students receive centers around technical research, automotive workplace skills and practices, and preparation for post-secondary education.



Waylon Fry — Earned a Youth Apprenticeship Certification and received a tool box and tools valued at \$11,000 from his employer Broadway Automotive

Students now have the opportunity to earn more than 26 college credits over the course of their junior and senior year as part of the Automotive Maintenance Technician (AMT) program in collaboration with the college. Upon graduating from high school, students will be prepared to either enter the workforce directly or continue their education for one more year to complete either a two-year Automotive Technician technical diploma or an Automotive Technology associate degree.

City Stadium Automotive® at East High is certified by the National Automotive Tech-

nician Education Foundation (NATEF) for Maintenance and Light Repair Program Standards. NATEF is an organization that examines the structure, resources, and quality of training programs and evaluates them against standards established by the industry. Students who receive NATEF certification are prepared to work in the automotive field, enroll in technical school, or both.

Meet The Instructors

Ben Hendricks developed a passion for tinkering with machinery and taking things apart while growing up on a farm. He started his automotive career as an apprentice and worked two years at an independent repair shop servicing trucks, tractors and semis. After his apprenticeship he spent 20 years working at a Ford Kia dealership and earned his ASE Master Certification, Ford Senior Master Certification and his Kia Master Elite Certification. In 2016, he was selected to compete in a Nationals Skills Cup in Southern California and placed in the top four, earning a spot in the World Cup Competition held in South Korea. Ben placed 2nd, beating out 60 of the world's best technicians.

Christopher Ziegler joined City Stadium Automotive® in September 2019. Chris taught at East De Pere High School for the past four years, making this school year his fifth year in teaching. Before teaching, he worked in con-



Shawn Muenster — Earned a Youth Apprenticeship Certification and received a tool box and tools valued at \$11,000 from his employer Broadway Automotive.

struction, automotive shops, and various other jobs. Chris has a manufacturing/ engineering degree. Chris's favorite part of his job is introducing students to working on vehicles in an automotive shop while still in high school. He emphasizes what a great opportunity this can be for students to get experience and find their passions.

To learn more about City Stadium Automotive®, visit gbaps.org/CSA.

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The Ahnapee Diesel Center



Luxemburg-Casco School District

The Luxemburg-Casco School District hosted a dedication and ribbon-cutting ceremony last fall for the Ahnapee Diesel Center. Located in the district's former middle school building on Church Street in Casco, the center houses the first credit-bearing, diesel-only high school education program in Wisconsin and is one of roughly 20 such programs nationwide.

Its facility features a 4,200-square-foot main instructional area, along with a 1,000-square-foot classroom space. The project converted the one-time Art and Wood Shop areas of the former Luxemburg-Casco Middle School into the diesel center. The dis-



trict's middle school moved to the main L-C campus at the start of the 2020–21 academic year. Among the significant modifications within the 4,200-square-foot main instructional area were the lowering of the concrete garage floor by 2 feet to accommodate a full-size semi-truck cab, enlargement of the front overhead door to 18 feet, creation of a new exterior ramp, the addition of a rear overhead door to facilitate entry of smaller diesel equipment, enhanced exhaust systems and ductwork to adequately distribute air and mitigate contaminants, attachment of interior and exterior

catch basins, and upgraded electrical outlets to support safe operations.

Ahnapee Diesel is a consortium of area high schools: Luxemburg-Casco, Denmark, Algoma and Kewaunee. Students in their junior and senior years are given the opportunity to earn college credits while also receiving credit towards high school graduation.

With successful completion of the college's Diesel Maintenance Technician (DMT) curriculum while in high school, students attain a one-year technical diploma. The required 26 credits include courses such as Transportation Welding 1 & 2, Diesel Lab Operations, Intro to Diesel Mechanics, Intro to Electrical Systems, Diesel Heavy Duty Electrical 1 & 2, Chassis Sub-Systems, Hydraulic/Pneumatic Systems, and Engine Sub-Systems.

Upon graduation from high school, students can choose to pursue a technical diploma as a Diesel Heavy Equipment Technician or a Diesel Medium & Heavy Truck Technician. Associate degrees in either Diesel Heavy Equipment Technology or Diesel Medium & Heavy Truck Technology also are possible student pathways.

In 2020 there were 275,400 people employed as diesel service technicians and mechanics, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. Employment is projected to grow 8 percent from 2020 to 2030; about 28,100 openings for diesel service technicians and mechanics are projected each year, on average, over that time frame. Employers increasingly prefer applicants who have completed postsecondary training programs in

diesel engine repair and who receive industry certification, according to the bureau.

Strong support from area companies and the regional transportation industry have been a catalyst in getting the Ahnapee Diesel program off the ground. "With the help of many area companies who have been willing to form strong partnerships with L-C, we are able to create a workspace mirroring that of a professional diesel mechanic," says Mike Snowberry, the district's director of learning services who is guiding the program's creation. "Our students will have quality instruction and fully equipped, professional-quality toolboxes, along with the new facilities. Almost all of the students in the diesel program have been placed in the Ahnapee Youth Apprenticeship program with our partner businesses. We believe that the L-C diesel program will be a win-win for our students and the local business community."

The Ahnapee Automotive Program

The Luxemburg-Casco School District also launched a new educational initiative — the Ahnapee Automotive program, located



within the high school — during the first semester of the 2020–21 school year. Students are provided with the opportunity to earn college credits while also receiving credit towards high school graduation.

Through successful completion of the Automotive Maintenance Technician (AMT) curriculum, students attain a one-year technical diploma. Following graduation from high school, they may choose to ladder into an associate degree in Automotive Technology or a two-year technical diploma as an Automotive Technician.

"One of the themes that we have heard loudly and clearly from our community, our business leaders in the transportation industry and from the college is that there is a huge

need to produce highly trained automotive technicians, and that those technicians can earn lucrative salaries in a very broad market," says Luxemburg-Casco District Superintendent Glenn Schlender. "Because of that messaging, we created the Ahnapee Automotive program. "The district believes in the importance of providing L-C students with a wide range of educational choices. This program is designed for those students with a mechanical aptitude, who enjoy diagnosing and solving automotive challenges."

To receive the one-year AMT technical diploma, students must complete 26 credits in courses such as Transportation Service Operations, Auto Service Operations, Brake Systems, Steering & Suspension Systems, Intro to Electrical Systems, Engine Repair, Engine Performance, Advanced Chassis Systems and Transportation Welding.

The district's 23-month referendum projects included significant renovations to Luxemburg-Casco High School. Dedicated on Oct. 29, 2020, the expanded and upgraded Automotive Shop on the northeast corner of the high school building has four fully equipped automotive bays with new lifts; a tire machine

and balancer; equipment to perform brake maintenance; a set of tools for each station; and a new automotive lab with exhaust system.

"We couldn't have done this without the help of the many great partners who stepped forward," says Mike Snowberry, the district's director of learning services who is spearheading the program. "One of the things that I tell people is, if you invest in us we're going to invest back in you. One of my passions is that I'm going to try to find you the best people I can in our school system that love turning wrenches. What gets me excited every day is helping students to find their purpose."

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READY MIX CONCRETE DRIVER CAREER



ARE YOU LOOKING FOR A CAREER PATH IN A FAST-PACED INDUSTRY?

Well, that *path* may already be paved in concrete. The ever-growing ready mixed concrete industry is in need of qualified individuals to drive ready mixed concrete trucks. Drivers who transport ready mix concrete are vital for the growth of the economy. And unlike over the road haulers, ready mix drivers have the benefit of being home every night.

A ready mix driver is responsible for transporting freshly mixed concrete from the batch plant to the job site in a safe manner. Drivers are the frontline contact for their company and get to travel to different job sites every day. Drivers receive great wages and benefits and have the opportunity to grow within their company.

Benefits

- Home every night instead of driving over the road
- Vast diversity of projects keep job ever-evolving and rarely redundant
- You can begin **driving right out of high school** with very little training or cost
- You can advance within a company
- Technology is a large part of the industry = if you are tech-adaptable you will succeed quickly
- You can be a part of infrastructure growth (build bridges, stadiums, buildings, overpasses, farms)
- Work good hours in the summer with a chance for overtime hours
- Competitive Wages, Fast-Paced, High-Demand Career



Qualifications

- Must have High School Diploma or GED equivalent
- Must have safe driving record
- Must have Wisconsin Class B Commercial Driving License
- Must be able to pass a pre-employment drug/alcohol screening to be considered. Random testing does occur annually
- Must have a positive attitude, strong work ethic and strong customer service



Education

Concrete Industry Management is a specialized four-year college business management degree offered at South Dakota State University. To learn more about the CIM program, go to <https://www.sdstate.edu/construction-and-operations-management/concrete-industry-management/>.



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