

In a Class of Their Own

Auto students reap benefits of scholarships, credits, jobs

A teenage Gary McMillan was ready to enter college following his senior year at Jay County, when he happened to take a basic auto repair class his senior year. The hands-on work interested the teen so much that instead he left for Lincoln Technical Institute to study auto and diesel engines - and as they say in the movies, "the rest is history..."

"I went to work in the industry for seven years, but it was not meant to be," McMillan said.

"I like working with kids - they're fun - always wanting to know more."

Lucky for his students, as they have amassed hundreds of scholarships to technical training schools, and hundreds of jobs in the industry.

"He's really knowledgeable," junior Lance Mitchey said. "He knows his stuff."

Senior Dillon Sutter agrees.

"He makes you find out the answers to the questions you have."

"He plays dumb at first. He doesn't just throw it up in your face and give you the answer. He makes you figure it out."

McMillan's approach has worked for Sutter, as he was part of a two-person team who won the Ford/AAA Troubleshooting contest and a \$10,000 scholarship to study diesel engines at UNOH in Lima, Ohio.

The big question for the class today is how to find and work on the 2010 Prius's 800 amp fuse.

"Never assume the Prius is shut off if there is silence," warns McMillan.

The students go to the computer and consult the shop manuals on the *All Data* program to see how to safely handle the hybrid system fuse

before continuing their work.

"This isn't like an English class, McMillan says. "I try to reteach the class in different ways, then they go out and practice. Everything we do is hands-on."

Replacing a faulty door lock is the job for senior Isaac Shawver. The 2004 Honda was dropped off for repair by the owner. "We've got a good customer base," claims teacher Gary McMillan. "We're not going to be fast, but we're cheap - we're free."



KANE BRAY

COURSES AT SOUTH ADAMS:

FIRST YEAR - Auto Technology Services I: Brakes, Steering and Suspension
SECOND YEAR - Auto Technology Services II: Electrical & Electronics and Engine Performance

DUAL CREDIT OPPORTUNITIES FROM IVY TECH:

6 college credits for Auto Technology I: AUTC 101 and AUTC 122
6 college credits for Auto Technology II: AUTC 109 and AUTC 113

INDUSTRY CERTIFICATION: NA3SA

CO-CURRICULAR MEMBERSHIPS AND EXPERIENCES:

SkillsUSA membership, contests, scholarships
Ford/AAA Troubleshooting Contest with scholarships
Job Outlook 2010-2020: 17% increase

-- BUREAU OF LABOR STATISTICS

"It's a good class to take.

The class provides good knowledge you can use no matter what you do." -- KANE BRAY, SENIOR



Twenty-eight years and still going strong is Automotive Technology teacher Gary McMillan, who says that he is still interested in teaching "because the kids make it so much fun." McMillan assists third-year auto student Chris Hudson (left), as they check the *All Data* program to problem solve a question regarding the transmission on a Prius. Meanwhile, Dillon Sutter and Lance Mitchey (right), check the car's fluids. The shop currently has 10 cars, some needing repairs for teachers and community members, giving the students real-life experiences.