

Automotive Program Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, November 9th, 2022
11:00-12:30

Attendees:

Automotive Partners and Board Members

- Nick Fox, Point S Tire and Auto
- John Johnson, Placer Motors
- Kit Johnson, J4 Automotive
- Bruce Knudsen, MT Auto Dealers Assoc.
- Jillian , MT Auto Dealers Assoc.
- Mark Lillrose, MT Dept. of Labor
- Scott Lynch, Helena Motors
- Nick Hofferber, Hoff's Automotive
- Kim Ballard, Meinike Car Care Center

Helena College Faculty/Staff

- Sandra Bauman, Dean/CEO
- Stephanie Hunthausen, Executive Director of CTE
- Jerry Stewart, Automotive Instructor
- Dave Jones, Automotive Instructor
- Kathy Mortimore, Trades Advisor and Career Specialist
- Melissa Mouse, Administrative Assistant -CTE

• **Program Review**

○ **First Year Auto Review**

2021-2022: 10 students

2022-2023: 22 students (12 students on campus, 10 at Deer Lodge State Prison)

Employment of students: Jerry stated that some are very passionate and ready to be employed. Some need some more time

- Helena College is the first college in Montana to be approved to teach classes remotely to a prison population using "Second Chance Pell" funding. Automotive was selected as the program to begin this program. The first year classes are broadcasted via the internet to the prison. There is an instructor on site for the hands on lab portion of the courses.
- First Ever Automotive Inspection Days on October 19th and 20th. Approximately 20 cars from the community were inspected by our students.

○ **Second Year Auto Review**

2021-2022: 6 students

2022-2023: 4 students

2nd year all employed

- **Trainings and Activities Updates**

- State Training –Summer 2022
Jerry Stewart facilitated Heavy Duty Diesel and Electricity Training during the 2 week long state instruction days.
- Boy Scout Merit Badge University
Jerry assisted about 20 Boy Scouts from around the state earn their Automotive Merit Badge. This was held on Saturday, October 8th in our automotive shop. 2nd yr students came in to help
- Hybrid Summit coming up January 9-13th. The first one was held last January. Hybrids were purchased and Transaxles bought for power train. Classes were taught on electrical and how to break it down. Classroom and lab testing took place. The classes were recorded.
- Skills USA was held on our campus last year. We will host it again Mar 30-31st this year. Helena College has committed to host for another 2-3 years.

- **Recruitment and Job Placement**

- First year students have been encouraged to complete resumes and have been given contact information for area employers that have indicated they have a need for an internship placement. Many students used the Helena College tutoring service to assist in their resume building.
- We held students back from applying for jobs the first 5 weeks of semester. This gave them time to work on the basics such as rotating tires, oil changes, torque on bolts, etc. Jerry stated that the students are taught electrical during the 2nd 5 week block. The 3rd 5 weeks of the semester focuses on breaks. The students are taught how to pull everything apart and put it back together. The class goes through a lot of brake fluid.

- **Changes and Improvements**

- New Motorvac cooling flush system
- New wheelwell lift

- **Questions for Advisory Partners**

- How many of your employees are from Helena College?
 - How are their performance?
 - What kind of training would have made them a better employee?
 - What do they struggle with most?
 - How many students are your looking at needing?
- What skill sets are the most important for a new student just starting?
- What tasks should the students be able to perform before applying for a job?
- What is the best method for applying for a job?
- Can Helena College instructors stop in to visit our students during work hours?

- Can Helena College instructors stop in and take pictures of new engine designs, vehicle repairs etc.?
- Do any shops have alternators and starters that they could donate for Helena College to use as students learn to take apart and put back together?
- **Comments/Discussion from Advisory Partners:**
 - Regarding students' readiness to begin their internships:
 - Basic maintenance and knowledge of fluids/oil is enough in shops where each student has a mentor and shop foreman to sign off on work. Brakes and suspension is another important step. Students need to know how to do inspections and diagnose consistently.
 - As long as students can diagnose there is someone else in shops to do the work.
 - It was generally determined that it would be ok to hire after first 5 weeks of the school year, but even better to wait until after the second block.
 - It would be great if high school students could take Helena College classes – especially students from East Helena High School.
 - The new partnership agreement states a minimum of 6 hrs, which isn't enough for students to retain information.
 - Questions regarding the 20 hr maximum. Dave Jones says that during the semester, over 20 causes some students to struggle at school. It was suggested that during the interview process, have students discuss work hours over breaks...are they local, going to home for break, etc?
 - Regarding retention, former students and current faculty say that those who did not complete the second year were students that weren't ready to be at school.
 - Sandy Bauman commented that we now have a certificate for after 1st yr. for those that are not ready or able to complete a second year.
 - Jerry Stewart commented that Automotive Technology is harder than students think. There is a need for attention for detail.
 - First-year student introductions and time for them to speak to prospective employers concluded the meeting.