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ORANGE COUNTY AUTOMOBILE DEALERS ASSOCIATION HOSTS 17th ANNUAL AUTOMOTIVE TECHNOLOGY COMPETITION

-- The "OC's" Brightest Automotive Minds Compete for College Scholarships --

FOUNTAIN VALLEY, CA (January 4, 2010) – Celebrating its 17th annual automotive technology competition, the Orange County Auto Dealers Association (OCADA) will host the event Saturday, January 23, 2010, at the Hyundai Motor America headquarters in Fountain Valley. Twelve high school seniors are preparing to represent the best-of-the-best in the OCADA Automotive Technology Competition with the winners receiving a college scholarship.

“OCADA is very proud to sponsor and organize this event that highlights the incredible talents of these students and brings awareness to the excellent opportunities in the automotive technology field,” said John Sackrison Executive Director of the Orange County Automobile Dealers Association (OCADA). “We are excited that once again we will be awarding each participating student college scholarships to further their automotive technology studies.”

The goal of the OCADA Automotive Technology Competition is to recognize these students’ technical prowess and to introduce them to possibilities available with a career in automotive technology. OCADA also hopes to increase the development of first-rate automotive school-to-career programs in Orange County and to boost interest in a field with excellent job security and economic opportunities. Automotive technicians can make upwards of \$100,000 annually and is a field high in demand.

The U.S. Department of Labor says job opportunities in this occupation are “very good” for people who have a strong technical background and training. The industry is expected to add 11,000 jobs annually through 2016. To become an automotive technician requires two years of post secondary education and further training and certifications are provided while employed at a dealership.

About the Competition

The competition began with a 100-question written exam in early October 2009 with 71 seniors from 12 Orange County high schools participating. The six highest-scoring, two-person teams advanced to the hands-on competition and have been paired with a local Orange County new vehicle dealership to train for the January 23rd competition. While preparing for this competition the students work closely with the sponsoring dealerships allowing them to take this career for a test drive. The sponsoring dealerships include:

Allen Hyundai, Laguna Niguel – San Clemente High School
Guaranty Chevrolet, Santa Ana – Savanna High School
Hardin Honda, Anaheim, - Buena Park High School
Mullahey Chevrolet Kia, Fullerton – Sunny Hills High School
Park Place Lexus, Mission Viejo – Mission Viejo High School
Toyota of Orange, Orange – Loara High School

Each dealer and dealer technician will invest a great deal of time training and preparing these students for the competition and provide a car that the students will “debug” during the event. The Saturday event represents the culmination of long training sessions with the vehicles and gives students an opportunity to showcase their problem solving and technical skills. The competitors and their instructors are:

Buena Park – Students Kyle Barrick and Eduardo Flores - Instructor James Williamson
Loara – Students Ben Hicks and Jonathan Greenhalgh- Instructor Russell Bacarella
Mission Viejo – Students Evan Cortes and Mark Azeltine - Instructor Ken Welch
San Clemente – Students Daniel Lussier and Oliver Poesi - Instructor Josh Wish
Savanna – Students Ryan McLaughlin and Justin Ames – Instructor Mike Russell
Sunny Hills – Students Cesar Padilla and Colin Lamontagne - Instructor Charlie Zepeda

For the competition, each team will be given 90 minutes to detect and repair vehicle “bugs,” with each correctly restored malfunction earning points. The winning team will be sponsored by OCADA to compete in the National Automotive Technology Competition held in New York City in April.

About the Orange County Automobile Dealers Association

Established in 1938, the Orange County Automobile Dealers Association serves the more than 121 franchised new vehicle dealers in Orange County. The association represents the interests of member dealers and provides them with information, services, political representation and other programs that enhance their collective businesses.

For more information, please contact OCADA at 949-428-5050 or on-site contact Sean Taylor at 949-293-2509; staylor@ocada.org.