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Contacts:

**Sean Taylor, OCADA
(949) 428-5050, staylor@ocada.org**

**Erin Peacock, Peacock PR
(949) 464-1096, peacockpr@cox.net**

**ORANGE COUNTY’S BRIGHTEST HIGH SCHOOL AUTOMOTIVE MINDS
COMPETE FOR COLLEGE SCHOLARSHIPS
AND A TRIP TO THE NATIONALS**

**The Orange County Automobile Dealers Association Hosts 19th Annual
Automotive Technology Competition at Kia Headquarters in Irvine**

More than \$1.2 Million in Scholarships Awarded During Past 18 Years

NEWPORT BEACH, Calif. (Jan. 31, 2012) –The Orange County (CA.) Automobile Dealers Association (OCADA) will kick-off its 19th annual Automotive Technology Competition on Saturday, February 11, 2012, at the Kia Motors America headquarters in Irvine, CA. The competition assembles the most accomplished talent from local high school automotive technology programs. This year, 12 students from six high schools will compete for college scholarships and to be known as the “best-of-the-best” locally and nationally.

“As the technology behind today’s cars becomes more sophisticated and computer-based, the market for skilled auto technicians continues to grow,” said John Sackrison, executive director of the Orange County Automobile Dealers Association. “These auto tech students represent the brightest of the bright in Orange County and we’re proud to provide them well-deserved scholarships and the forum to showcase their talents at the 19th annual Automotive Technology Competition.”

The competition represents the culmination of arduous testing and long training sessions with local professional dealership technicians working on real vehicles, and gives the students an

opportunity to showcase their problem-solving and technical skills. Last October, 72 seniors from 14 Orange County high schools took a 100-question written exam, with the six highest-scoring, two-person teams advancing to the hands-on competition.

To train for the competition, the teams are paired with an Orange County new vehicle dealership, which invests significant time and energy to prepare the students. The dealership provides one of its expert dealer technicians to train the student team and also provides a car that the students will “debug” during the actual competition. The partnership also provides an excellent opportunity for students to take the career for a test drive. In fact many of the students enjoy it so much they work part-time at the dealership as they complete their education.

This year, the teams include:

- San Clemente High School, with students Elliot Ferguson and Zachary Milton and instructor James Dunlap, with sponsor Allen Hyundai
- Sunny Hills High School, with students David Feltenberger and Christopher Villar and instructor Charlie Zepeda, with sponsor Don-A-Vee Chrysler Jeep
- Mission Viejo High School, with students Josh Auerbach and Nathan Steele and instructor Ken Welch, with sponsor Penske Toyota Scion of Rancho Santa Margarita Ford,
- Buena Park High School, with students Mike Espaillat and Pedro Valdez and instructor James Williamson, with sponsor Simpson Buick GMC
- North Orange County ROP, with students Geovanni Enciso and Juan Quiroz and instructor Russ Bacarella, with Toyota of Huntington Beach
- Loara High School, with students Steven Brown and Erick Paredes and instructor John Kasabian, with sponsor Toyota of Orange

For the competition, each team is allotted 60 minutes on workstations and 60 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 at the New York International Auto Show in New York City in April.

The goal of the OCADA Automotive Technology Competition is to recognize these students’ technical expertise 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 good for people who have a strong technical background and training. The industry is expected to add 3,600 jobs annually through 2018. 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 OCADA

Established in 1938, the Orange County Automobile Dealers Association serves the more than 105 franchised new vehicle dealers in Orange County. The association represents the common interests of member dealers and provides them with information and services 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.

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