



Girls power

At Automotive Program at Fitzgerald High School

By Maria Cooper

At Fitzgerald High School, all classes have a limit to the number of students, but one class; however, one program Automotive Technology program, is inspiring females to join. More females join this program every trimester because of the individuality of the classes and the chance to develop daily skills. Since females are often learning new skills, they can begin the Automotive Technology program feeling substandard since they are fewer in number to young men, but as the year goes on, females often develop a feeling of equality and freedom.

Korinne Seefried, from the

The next CTE page will feature Van Dyke-Lincoln

Automotive II class at Fitzgerald High School, expresses how she felt going into the Automotive program. "Being in the auto class is fun, at the beginning it was kind of weird being the only girl, but I got used to it." Korinne Seefried remains to be the only girl in the Automotive II class, but does not categorize genders as different, but instead as equal. "Women are just as smart as men, and sometimes men are smarter than women,

not saying women are better but equal."

Before the 20th century, women could not vote and their professions were often predetermined as a wife and a mother. Since then, women have striven for equality and have gained much ground; the achievement of liberty is secure for women of all generations to come. Seefried states, "I mean back then it was [that] all men work and women stayed at home. Well today that has changed. People should not dwell in the past, they should move on and try new things." With increased support from important male figures, women are now more encouraged to succeed. This support has created a more powerful and with-



standing mentality amongst all people and therefore developed a future of hope for all genders.

Mr. Bradley Pollum is the new teacher for the Automotive program at Fitzgerald High School. He uses a variety of skills to help students learn more about the Automotive field. Korinne Seefried states, "When I first found out that we had a new teacher I was kind of upset. I knew the old auto teacher very well and was excit-

ed to have him as a teacher. Since the beginning of the school year I've gotten to know Mr. Pollum. Mr. Pollum is a great teacher and he gets along with everyone very well. When Mr. Pollum teaches he gives a little bit of everything; bookwork, lectures, and demos, I definitely learn more with this style of teaching. The Automotive program gives definite opportunities for anyone who is willing and deter-

mined to learn and attempt new things.

The Automotive II class, competes with other schools in the AYES competition; they are excited to prove what they've learned to other schools. "Yes, I plan to go into several competitions and I am my Auto class" representative, I'm so excited to be able to do this," Seefried exclaims. The Automotive program continues to encourage students of all genders to join the program. Korinne continues, "Of course we could always use more girls in the Auto class, I believe if you have an interest, try it out and see if you like it."

Opposing of all forms discrimination, Fitzgerald High School is one of the most diverse school in Warren, Michigan. Fitzgerald believes in equality; some would say that it is their specialty. An equal opportunity is what all genders have fought for; we should rejoice in the change that has come. We can only live, and try to be happy enduring the hard times and rejoicing in the good times. The Automotive program has helped breakdown the societal barriers that have existed for many years. Hopefully, as time wanes on, the barriers will cease to exist all together.

The future of automotive education at Fitzgerald High

By Gau Shoua Vue

Warren Fitzgerald High School has a well organized Automotive Education Program. The Technology Building was built in 2002 with state of the art equipment. This new equipment has enhanced student education. At the very core of the building are the teachers who have chosen to dedicate their time to assist the students in learning the basic fundamentals to attain their goals and future careers.

Mr. Bradley Pollum is a new addition to the Warren Fitzgerald High School staff and teaches Auto I and II in the Technology Building. This is his first year of teaching, but he is well equipped because of his training from former jobs. He worked for two years at an auto dealership and one year at an independent gas station repair shop. He also dedicated seven years at a tow truck company where he co-managed the shop and took care of both the customers and vehicles. Mr. Pollum has always been involved in the auto industry. He says, "I've always been around auto my whole life. As I grew up, I always had a feeling that I wanted to be a teacher and after high school graduation, the two ideas melded together".

When Mr. Pollum started teaching at Fitzgerald, the students were very welcoming. They greeted him not just as a new teacher, but also as a friend. Both Mr. Pollum and the students were optimistic about the journey they will

have learning together. His Auto II students enjoyed the contrast in their learning process from their former teacher to their current teacher. Mr. Pollum also enjoyed the differences of being the teacher instead of the student. He says, "the transition from being a student of six years in college to being the teacher adds responsibility; making sure the students are getting everything out of the program, doing what they need to do while learning."

Auto I is the introduction course to the auto program; no experience or previous knowledge is expected of the students. Students are taught the basics of vehicle maintenance and slowly progress from there. Auto II is a class which requires the students to have completed Auto I in order to build on their previous knowledge. The students in this class have the privilege to study the automobile more in depth through lessons about electrical wiring, steering, and suspension. A typical day in class is usually split into two sessions. In the first part of class, students cover new material, review the material that they have previously learned, and complete bookwork practice. In the second half of class, students work in the shop where they practice applying what they have learned onto the cars. Mr. Pollum says, "Application is the big part of the program, being able to apply what you learned and have that first-hand experience."

Mr. Pollum's short term goals this year are to be better



acquainted with the other staff members and learn how the school operates. He also says that he would like "to be active with the school and get the students to a level where they can compete in other programs and succeed in class." His long term goal is to one day be more competitive and have his students participate in the Ford AAA and SkillsUSA.

The Ford AAA program is a nationwide skills challenge for students in the 11th and 12th grades. It is co-sponsored by AAA and Ford Motor Company. The purpose of this competition is to encourage students to pursue careers in the automobile industries. Each school can enter one team per instructor, with a minimum of two students per team. The students are required to take a written state qualifying exam. The combination of the test scores is the team's score and accounts for 40 percent of the

final score. Only the ten teams with the highest scores can move forward to the hands on portion of the competition. In this part of the competition, new Ford Motor Company vehicles are uniformly ipped and each team must diagnose and repair the problem with the highest proficiency of time and work ethics. The two winning teams in the end will win trips to the national competition. In the national competition, each team will be given a vehicle with identical malfunctions and the team must diagnose and repair it; the national competition is similar to the state competition with the exception of a supervising judge who will supply the automobile parts as needed. When the team is finished, the team and the judge will take a short road test to check if the vehicle is working properly. When they return, they have a second chance to diagnose and repair

anything that is needed before the final judgment. Like the state competition, the participants will be graded on a combination of quality, workmanship, repair time, and scores on the written exam. Prizes for the students include scholarships, savings bonds, trophies, jackets, certificates, shop manuals, trips, and automobile equipments. Instructors can receive equipment or public trophy for the school. In addition, all participants have a chance to get a job. The names of the contestants are submitted to AAA affiliated service facilities, Ford Motor companies, and many other sponsoring organizations.

SkillsUSA, was formerly known as VICA, is another competition for aspiring automotive technicians. This vast organization consists of many members from teachers to students in high school and college. The goal of this organization is to help students excel and ensure that America has a skilled workforce in the future. These programs range from local, state, and nationwide competitions. Students are not only provided with a great education, but also life changing experiences. The program encourages their participants in leadership, teamwork, citizenship, and character. Students that participate in this program benefit greatly because of the different scholarships that can be attained.

Another program that is greatly encouraged for the students at Fitzgerald to participate in is AYES, Automotive Youth

Educational Systems. This organization has created partnerships with many dealerships and schools. It is a school to work program which students can apply for at the end of their junior year. If the students are truly interested, they can receive a summer job working at a car dealership. This program allows the students a job shadowing opportunity where they will be under the guidance of an experienced technician. This opportunity will enhance the students' technical skills and teach them how to be a valuable employee. It also offers opportunities for the students to participate in "career days" and "career fairs" at local schools.

Mr. Pollum believes that it is important for everyone to know the basics of their automobile and how it functions. He feels that this would only benefit car owners because if he or she understands the basics of their car, they would then better understand the workers at the car dealerships or repair shops and will know if someone is trying to take advantage of them or not. He says, "An informed customer is always the best and "it's a great idea for everyone. Being involved in the auto industries has many advantages, such as helping friends and family fix their cars, saving money, and even a chance at making a side profit. Mr. Pollum has come to the conclusion that teaching is a reward in itself. He says, being able to work with those students of all levels has been rewarding.

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