

## **Lawson State Community College**

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### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **FIAT CHRYSLER, NC3 and Lawson State Community College Partner to Establish Mopar CAP Local Program**

**(BESSEMER, Alabama)** – FIAT Chrysler Automobiles (FCA), National Coalition of Certification Centers (NC3) and Lawson State Community College announced formation of a new education partnership for the state of Alabama, Mopar CAP (Career Automotive Program) Local national program that will advance employment readiness for automotive students.

The Mopar CAP Local program, designed by the FCA Institute, will expand FCA's national automotive program that produces qualified student candidates for local dealership employment. Through a strategically structured CAP curriculum, students who have completed the general automotive program, become eligible to study a variety of self-study web-based and instructor-led courses. The curriculum covers two levels and advances from basic to more advanced automotive technology topics. Upon successful completion, students become Chrysler certified.

Select two-year programs from around the country with bigger automotive footprints have been identified to offer the program, according to Roger Tadajewski, executive director for NC3. "This is a part of a larger initiative to train 1,000 students per year in 100 colleges by year 2018. Through this endeavor, FCA and NC3 have officially established the first educational training program in the state of Alabama and the 17<sup>th</sup> in the country with the launch of Lawson State Community College."

This program is expected to establish an even stronger relationship between the college and the local dealership. Another benefit of the program is that it is offered to dealers at no cost. "The major commitment is time - building a relationship with the College and establishing a one-on-one, that is, one dealership to one student," said Jeff Nielsen, program director of NC3.

"We talk about workforce development and helping our young people to be able to ascertain employment. This partnership gives all of us the opportunity to be able to do that," said Dr. Perry W. Ward, president of Lawson State Community College. "The potential for expansion of

services for our college, community and state is absolutely fantastic and we are excited about the Mopar CAP Local program and FIAT Chrysler being here.”

Lawson State plays a huge role in the training and workforce development of students in the transportation industry. Its Alabama Center for Automotive Excellence (ACAE) is one of the most comprehensive education and training providers for students in the state of Alabama and regionally, in the southeast. The ACAE umbrellas six major transportation departments including – Auto Mechanics (AUM), General Motors, Toyota T10, Diesel Mechanics, Auto Body Repair, and Ford Asset.

The College’s role in the transportation industry expanded greatly last year when Lawson State received a four-year \$10 million Department of Labor grant to provide innovative education and career training for transportation-related occupations. Lawson State became the lead institution of the Southeastern Transportation Network, a consortium of colleges from contiguous states that also included Atlanta Technical College, Atlanta, Georgia; Central Louisiana Technical Community College, Alexandria, Louisiana; and Copiah-Lincoln Community College, Wesson, Mississippi. Each institution received \$2 million and Lawson State received an additional \$2 million for administrative purposes.

“The Southeastern Transportation Network and the Mopar CAP Local Program will work well together in providing the skills needed to give the workforce highly-skilled, highly-trained and highly-motivated workers to help them be efficient and effective in the marketplace,” Ward said.

Student enrollment for the program will begin in the Fall Semester 2016. As the program develops, future meetings are scheduled for strategic planning including advisory identification, curriculum review and training schedules. “ACAE is a growing entity and being sought out for the Mopar CAP Local program presents an excellent addition for what we are working to do,” said Tom Berryman, director of the Alabama Center for Automotive Excellence.

As with any business, consumer service and satisfaction loom as significant priorities for dealerships. “In meeting after meeting that I attend, one of the biggest issues, is that we cannot take care of our customers fast enough to to service the cars that we are selling. It’s a critical problem in my district as well as, I believe, throughout the country,” said John Harrison, area manager for Alabama market and car dealers. “We are very excited to have this program here in the Bessemer market, locally in Alabama. A lot of the guys here have travelled to out of state schools trying to recruit students and to have local students who live in Alabama is going to be so much more beneficial to us to help get our shops filled with qualified workers.”

“A program like this when it is successful is a win-win for everybody - the dealers, our students, parents, the community and the college,” Ward said.

## **ABOUT LAWSON STATE**

***Lawson State Community College – host to President Barack Obama (March 2015); ranked the Nation’s #5 Community College (2013); recognized as a “Champion of Change” by the White House (2011); ranked as one of “America’s 50 Best Community Colleges.” (2010)***

*Lawson State Community College, with campuses in Birmingham and Bessemer, seeks to provide accessible, quality educational opportunities, promote economic growth, and enhance the quality of life for students.*

The ***Alabama Center for Automotive Excellence*** consists of six transportation departments – Auto Mechanics (AUM), General Motors, Toyota T10, Diesel Mechanics, Auto Body Repair, and Ford Asset. [www.lawsonstate.edu](http://www.lawsonstate.edu)