

# ABAC NEWS

July  
August  
2024

The Official Newsletter of the Auto Body Association of Connecticut

ABAC Runs Strong Thanks to Their  
Supporting Advertisers & Sponsors!



**THANK YOU  
FOR YOUR  
SUPPORT**

**"In Unity There is Strength; In Knowledge There is Power"**

**Your Car, Your Choice** - Find us at [www.abaconn.org](http://www.abaconn.org)

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## ABAC President's Message

**Bob Amendola**

## The History and Growth of the ABAC News and Supporting Advertisers Directory



In September 2000, then ABAC President Mike Wilkowski met with two stalwart supporters of the Collision and Repair industry, Dave Fogarty and Don Cushing. Together, they conceived the idea of an association newsletter.

With guidance from Wilkowski and support from ABAC legend Mike Brunt, the ABAC News was ready to launch in November 2000, alongside the Supporting Advertisers Directory. This directory was instrumental in generating funds for the

ABAC's cause.

**The inaugural edition of the directory featured 28 advertisers.**

Fast forward to today, the ABAC News has evolved into a nationally recognized newsletter for the Auto Body Association of Connecticut. The Supporting Advertisers Directory has exploded and now includes over 100 advertisers, showcasing significant growth and longevity from its humble beginnings.

### Acknowledging Long-standing Supporters

Three original advertisers have been with us since 2000:

1. **The Lorensen Auto Group**
2. **Bald Hill Dodge Chrysler Jeep**
3. **Suburban Subaru**

We deeply appreciate their 24 years of unwavering commitment to the ABAC and the ABAC News.

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### **Importance of Supporting Advertisers**

Our Supporting Vendors' partnerships are one of the the single largest financial investments in the ABAC. Their support is crucial for the success of the ABAC News and the association. We encourage our members to consider these vendors for their individual businesses. The dedication of our supporting advertisers significantly contributes to our achievements. A directory of these supporters is included in every edition of ABAC News and is also available on our website.

### **Platinum and Gold Sponsors**

We extend special thanks to our Platinum Sponsors, Buckley Wynne & Parese, and Mauro Motors (BMW of North Haven/Mercedes-Benz of North Haven), and our Gold Sponsor, Bald Hill Auto Group, alongside all our supporting advertisers.

### **Member Involvement**

We encourage members to become more involved with the association. More participation means stronger industry representation. If you have ideas or want to help but are unsure how, please contact me. Our officers and board of directors volunteer their time and effort to improve our industry, and your support is invaluable.

### **Vendor Spotlight and Advertising**

Supporting Advertisers are encouraged to utilize our Vendor Spotlight in ABAC News. For featuring your company in an upcoming issue, contact Don Cushing at [abacnews13@gmail.com](mailto:abacnews13@gmail.com) or Heather Romaniello at [abacadmin.heather@gmail.com](mailto:abacadmin.heather@gmail.com).

If you want to potentially grow your business by becoming a supporting advertiser in the ABAC News, contact Advertising Director Dave Fogarty at 860-227-0653. This could be one of your best business decisions.

### **Support Those Who Support You and remember, In Unity There is Strength.**

As your President, I constantly urge at every function and meeting to our members to purchase their products and services from those supporting advertisers who support YOUR ABAC.

### **Final Thanks**

Thank you once again to all our Supporting Advertisers. Your support enables the ABAC to continue being one of the best associations in the country, achieving a high level of professionalism.

Stay diligent and please continue to support your association; onwards and upwards!

Sincerely,

*Bob Amendola*

Autoworks of Westville

President - Auto Body Association of Connecticut

[Autoworksofwestville@gmail.com](mailto:Autoworksofwestville@gmail.com)



### **ABAC News Questions for Vendor Spotlight**

#### **How many employees do you have in parts?**

I have 6 employees plus one driver.

#### **How many techs do you assist in the shop**

We have 19 technicians between our 2 buildings

#### **Do you have a dedicated person just for wholesale calls?**

Yes. I have one specific person and myself, however any given day we will take over 100 phone calls.

#### **How do you handle wholesale deliveries? Do you make multiple deliveries?**

I have one dedicated parts driver. However, if needed I can pull from a pool of drivers from sales to take any emergency deliveries. Any SOP orders would be a one day delivery.

#### **What area(s) do you cover?**

The areas that we cover range from Madison Connecticut to Greenfield Massachusetts and anywhere in between.

#### **Do you have an outside sales rep?**

Unfortunately, no. This is handled by myself and or my assistant.

#### **What is your inventory size?**

We have currently \$423,000 which is inclusive of tires

#### **What parts systems does Subaru offer that you use for your shops?**

The business system that is used here at our store is AutoMate. We also, utilize a Snap-on EPC through Subaru of America to look up parts.

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**Do you use OEC, CCC, etc.?**

We currently exclusively use OEC's Collision Link software. However, we have just recently reached out to the folks at CCC and still have to decide to get on board with their system or stay with Collision Link or use both.

**Do you have any online business?**

Through our website we do have an online business which is partnered with SimplePart and does generate some outside business for us.

**How did you become involved in the parts business?**

In 2003 an opportunity arose with an Assistant Parts Manger opening at the Subaru dealership. I was a flat rate technician there for 3 years. Due to some recent medical diagnosis issues that I had been made aware of, I knew that wrenching for a living wasn't going to be a long-term career that I had thought it would be. So, from that point I was an Assistant Parts Manager until a year and a half ago that finally my opportunity to become a Parts Manager was earned.

**How long have you been in the automotive industry?**

I started this journey in 1991, early in my junior year of High School. I interned at a Dodge Dealership in Brookfield, Massachusetts that my High School guidance counselor had set me up with. I will never forget the first customer vehicle I was able to work on. It was a 1988 Chrysler Reliant K convertible. I was tasked to replace the radiator in it. I was very nervous, however there were no leaks after the repair. That was 33 years ago!

I knew I liked cars and my friends and I would work on our own cars. After graduating High School, I spent 2 years in a Post Graduate program in Worcester, Ma. After those 2 years, I signed up for a Ford Program called the FORD ASSET Program. This was based out of Blackstone Regional Technical High School. The College courses took place at Quinsigamond Community College in Worcester, Ma. After completing this 2-year program and being sponsored by a Ford Dealership, I became a Ford Master Technician with an Associate's Degree. I left there around the summer of 1999 and found a new opportunity at a small Subaru Dealership in Webster, Ma called TriState Subaru under the management of Peter Krause. I have been employed at multiple stores that he owned over the years. He sold the Subaru location in Webster to another owner. I didn't last long there. I worked for a year at another Subaru location in Shrewsbury, Ma. until I received a phone call from a familiar voice. It was a Parts Manager that since has retired from Suburban Subaru he asked if I could come work for him and I found my way back home working for Mr. Krause again. So, I've been here 10 years and hope to retire here.

**Tell us a little about yourself**

I'm 50 years old, I am married to a wonderful woman for the past 26 years. I have 2 children. My son is 19 and my daughter is 16. We live in Woodstock, CT and have 3 dogs. I also am a retired volunteer call firefighter of 20 years.

**What do you see in the future of the parts industry?**

As of current it appears as though the state the country is in, and financial burden people are in, people prefer to repair their vehicles instead of buying new ones. People will always need transportation in some form or another whether or not if powered by gasoline or by batteries.

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The industry is definitely growing and the demand is and always will be there. Accidents happen and or things break. Nothing is infallible.

### **How did you become involved with the ABAC?**

Once I became the manager it was tasked to me to be aware of one of the most important customers that we service on a daily basis (besides our in-house retail customers) and that is our body shops. One valuable asset that my dealer principal alerted me to is the **ABAC News Magazine** and the **ABAC News Advertisers Directory**. This was a look into our folks who work at body shops, who we as parts professionals sometimes take for granted.

I had an opportunity to go to a meeting a few months ago in May. It was at the Sheraton Hotel in Rocky Hill. I met a few people there and learned a great deal from the meeting which I took back to my store and began some new processes to help our customers. I plan on going to more meetings, which I don't believe many dealers do. We need to have a better relationship between us and them.

**We here at Suburban Subaru have been proud to be an ABAC News Supporting Advertiser since its inception in November of 2000.**

For more information, you can reach Bill at Suburban Subaru Parts direct line 860-432-7614 or via email at [BZiarko@Krausecars.com](mailto:BZiarko@Krausecars.com)

The Auto Body Association of Connecticut would like to thank Bill for taking the time for our interview. We wish him the best in his business and for the continued support of the ABAC.

***Submitted by Don Cushing***





## 3<sup>RD</sup> Annual Golf Outing

**Location:** Lyman Orchards Golf Club, Middlefield, CT

**Date:** Wednesday, October 2, 2024

**7:00 AM REGISTRATION – 8:30AM SHOTGUN – Jones Course**

**ENTRY FEE: \$150 Includes: Green Fee, Cart, Lunch & Dinner @ Awards Banquet**

Company Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

### Foursome:

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

4. \_\_\_\_\_



If you do not have a foursome, pairings will be made!

Total: \_\_\_\_\_ #Golfers X \$150 each

\$\_\_\_\_\_ Plus \_\_\_\_\_ #Dinners (non-golfers) @ \$65 Ea.

**Payment must accompany registration.**

NOTE: **Registration isn't confirmed w/o payment.**

**Payment will not be accepted on tournament day.**

Payments

Checks Payable to **ABAC**, mail registrations to:

104 Cheshire Road Prospect, CT 06712

CC Payment available

Contact Heather at ABAC abacadmin.heather@gmail.com

For more information or to donate a **raffle prize**:

Contact: Tony Cavallaro Jr, Joe Cavallaro, or

David Esposito

### Sponsorship Opportunities:

- ☐ Event Platinum Sponsor (\$4000)
- ☐ ~~Diamond Dinner Sponsor (\$3000)~~
- ☐ ~~Gold Grand Prize Sponsor (\$2500)~~
- ☐ Silver Breakfast Sponsor (\$2000)
- ☐ Hospitality Sponsor (\$1850)
- ☐ Beverage Cart Sponsor (\$1500)
- ☐ ~~Longest Drive (\$850)~~
- ☐ ~~Closest To the Pin (\$850)~~
- ☐ Hole Sponsorships (\$500)
- ☐ Tee Signs: (\$150ea)

## Forced Arbitration: A Win for Business, a Loss for Consumers.



John M. Parese is a partner at the New Haven-based firm of Buckley Wynne & Parese

Forced arbitration clauses have become increasingly common in commercial contracts over the past few decades. These clauses affect all aspects of commerce and how corporations can be held accountable for transgressions and unlawful behaviors.

Are they good for consumers or just for the corporations?

Forced arbitration clauses require consumers to settle disputes with companies through private arbitration rather than the court system. That means disputes are decided by private arbitrators instead of judges and juries. While businesses tout the benefits of arbitration, consumer advocates argue that these clauses unfairly strip away consumer rights – specifically, the right to sue in court.

The simple fact that so many large companies such as telecommunication companies, large employers, transportation services, hospitality providers, banks, credit card companies, and other financial institutions insist on mandatory arbitration, thus avoiding courts, judges and juries, speaks to the advantages they perceive in doing so.

Forced arbitration tends to favor businesses in a few noteworthy ways. First, it is generally less expensive. The process is streamlined, with limited discovery and expedited hearings. Second, many arbitration clauses prohibit class actions and punitive damages, protecting companies from large-scale lawsuits and big awards in the face of even egregious conduct. Third, unlike public court proceedings, arbitration is conducted privately, shielding businesses from negative publicity.

Fourth, arbitrators may be less prone to sympathy and/or hold views more aligned with that of a business owner or corporation, and thus may be more likely to issue a more favorable decision than a jury. Finally, arbitration decisions are typically binding with very limited grounds for appeal, providing businesses more certainty and less risk of protracted litigation.

Forced arbitration, particularly on such a large scale, also has the corollary effect of stifling progress through precedent. In other words, many of the most important rights and protections we have come to enjoy as citizens have come from individuals bringing lawsuits resulting in important court rulings and verdicts. Since arbitrated decisions are confidential and do not set transparent legal precedent, these decisions inherently limit the development of consumer protection laws.

If you have the option of opting out of a forced arbitration clause, you ought to consider that option. This could preserve important rights in the event of future litigation. What is more, if a dispute arises, parties can always agree to use arbitration as a means of resolving a dispute.

Some contracts give you the right to opt out of forced arbitration within a certain period of time, typically 30 to 60 days, by notifying the company that you wish to opt-out. Check your contract for the deadline and for specific instructions for opting out.

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While businesses argue that arbitration provides a faster, more efficient way to resolve disputes, that doesn't tell the whole story. Judges and juries are essential to maintaining legal order, proper enforcement of the law and unfettered accountability for transgressions. As forced arbitration clauses continue to proliferate, the debate over their fairness and impact on consumer rights is likely to intensify, and for good reason.

Attorney John M. Parese is a partner at the New Haven-based law firm of Buckley Wynne & Parese. His focus is on personal injury cases of all types. He can be reached at 203-776-2278 or [jpase@bwplaw.com](mailto:jpase@bwplaw.com).

## UPCOMING EVENTS



Just a reminder, the **3rd Annual ABAC Golf Tournament** is approaching and will be here before you know it. The tournament is scheduled for **Wednesday, October 2nd** at **Lyman Orchards Golf Club in Middlefield**.

We wanted to reach out to remind everyone who is interested in playing in the tournament to sign up. Spots are filling up quickly, and we want to make sure all our members, vendors, partners, sponsors, etc. have an opportunity to represent themselves at the event. If you don't golf, maybe there is an opportunity for you to sponsor someone

on your team or one of your partners who would like to play. If you're interested, **please find the Registration Form on page 7** with more information.

As a side note, we have a ton of great sponsors lined up, but we do still have a few sponsorship opportunities available. Right now, we have the Hospitality Sponsorship, Hole Sponsorships, and Tee Sign Sponsorships available. Let me know if you would like to sponsor or have someone we should reach out to for sponsorship.

**Any questions, contact Heather at 203-767-5731 or Joe Cavallaro at 860-296-2639**

- **Sept Membership Meeting - Tuesday, Sept 10, 2024 - The Woodwinds, Branford, 6:30 pm**
- **Nov Membership Meeting - Tuesday, Nov 19, 2024 - TBD**

# ABAC Member Appreciation Night



**AUTO BODY  
ASSOCIATION  
OF CONNECTICUT**



On Friday, August 9th, the ABAC hosted a night out for ABAC member shops and advertisers at Stony Creek Brewery in Branford. Over 65 guests attended and a great time was had by all!

There was live music by the local Wayne & Chris Duo and the event was catered by the Naples Pizza Truck. Attendees spanned between supporting advertisers, shop members and their families. It was so much fun to enjoy a night out and network with each other in a laid back setting. A huge benefit to being part of our association is the sense of camaraderie it affords and nights like these help to foster that between members.



While the majority of our membership meetings are educational and informative, an occasional meeting like this is just as beneficial to our members. Most of our meetings are jam-packed with information, resources and presentations that sometimes we need to carve out extra time like this just to network and mingle. We all work very hard and also deserve a night off every once in a while too!

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The ABAC wanted to host a night out for our members and supporting advertisers to show our appreciation for their support and involvement. Our association has never been stronger and more unified because of you and the dedication of our board of directors. We have continued to build on our foundation to improve the industry for us all and continue to protect the motoring public throughout the state.

If you were not able to attend this event, I would strongly encourage you to keep an eye out for the next one. It was so great to see familiar faces throughout the state and catch up with each other. Remember, we are colleagues not competitors and in unity there is strength. We hope you enjoy the pictures!

***Ashley Brunelle - Vice President - Auto Body Association of Connecticut***











## ABAC Government Relations Update



By Andy Markowski, Esq.  
Statehouse Partners, LLC - ABAC Lobbyist

New State Laws Impacting Motor Vehicles and Licensed Repairers

Out of the 175 bills passed by the Connecticut legislature during the 2024 session, there are several new laws that have or will be taking effect that should be of interest to licensed repairers. When laws are passed, new legislation effective dates are typically January 1, July 1, and October 1. New laws may also be effective upon passage or based on other criteria or dates. While many of these changes should be common sense, below are a few notable highlights and updates to our state's laws:

### Salvage Vehicle Inspections

By law, a salvage vehicle (declared a total loss by an insurer and then reconstructed) must be inspected to determine if it is in good working condition and properly equipped before it may be titled and registered. Under prior law, these inspections had to be conducted by DMV. Under a new law, the inspections must be performed by DMV-authorized licensed repairers. Public Act 24-20, Section 10, technically effective as July 1, 2024. But stay tuned for more information as DMV unveils details about this new program!

### Motor Vehicle Damage Appraiser License Renewal Dates

A new law revises the expiration date for initial licenses issued to motor vehicle damage appraisers and casualty claims adjusters from June 30 in an odd-numbered year to two years after the licensee's birthday that came before the license was issued. Public Act 24-138, sections 4&5, effective October 1, 2024.

### Bonds Required for Recyclers

This year the legislature passed a requirement for surety bonds for motor vehicle recyclers, just as is required under existing law for other DMV-licensed businesses, like dealers and repairers. Applicants seeking a new license or renewing one must furnish a \$25,000 surety bond, conditioned on the applicant or licensee complying with any state or federal law or regulation relating to the business of operating a motor vehicle recycler's yard and provided as indemnity for customers' losses due to licensee actions that constitute grounds for license suspension or revocation or the licensee going out of business. Public Act 24-20, Section 6, effective October 1, 2024.

### No Towing of Occupied Vehicles

Under a new law, a licensed wrecker may not knowingly allow anyone to occupy a vehicle while towing it. As is the case under existing law for other provisions related to wreckers' towing and transporting motor vehicles, a violation of this provision is (1) an infraction for a first offense and (2) a class D misdemeanor for subsequent offenses, punishable by a fine of up to \$250, up to 30 days in prison, or both. Public Act 24-20, section 37, effective October 1, 2024.

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### **Timeline of Background Checks for Dealer and Repairer Licensees**

A new law modifies the requirements for fingerprinting and background checks for applicants for a new or renewed car dealer's or repairer's license. Under prior law, applicants were required to (1) be fingerprinted and undergo a state and national criminal history records check within 30 days before submitting the application and (2) submit the results of the check to the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV). The new law eliminates the specified timeframe and the requirement for the applicant to submit the results to DMV. Public Act 24-20, section 5, effective October 1, 2024.

### **Loss of Use Payments for Rental Car Companies**

The legislature enacted a new law making changes related to car rental companies and loss of use by explicitly allowing rental companies to collect loss of use payments. Under the new law, companies may collect one day of the daily rental fee stated in the contract for every four labor hours required to repair the vehicle's damage, if the calculated amount does not exceed a reasonable estimate of the actual income lost due to the loss of use. Violations of the new law are deemed an unfair trade practice under the Connecticut Unfair Trade Practices Act. Public Act 24-21, effective as of July 1, 2024.

The 2024 State Legislative Session May Be Over, But That Doesn't Mean Your Local Legislators Don't Need To Hear From You – It Is An Election Year And They Need To Listen To Their Voters! Tell Them What Matters To You, The ABAC, And Connecticut's Collision Repair Industry!

Have a question? Want to express your opinion? Just want to know who now represents you in Hartford? Go to the website below and enter your home or business address to look up your state legislators; with a few quick clicks you can visit their official webpage, email them, or get their office phone number to make a call. Remember – as an ABAC member, your voice matters!

<https://www.cga.ct.gov/asp/menu/cgafindleg.asp>

*As always, if you have questions on legislation or regulations or if you would like more information on an issue, please feel free to contact ABAC Lobbyist Andy Markowski at: (860) 707-3620 or [andy@statehouselobbying.com](mailto:andy@statehouselobbying.com).*

***\*Information provided is for educational purposes only and does not constitute legal advice.***





## Menefee: How I Retain Skilled and Trained Employees

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***To compete with larger shops, I prioritize my employees' well-being through comprehensive benefits.***

Keeping skilled and trained employees is a top priority for all shops. But good employees are especially hard to come by for smaller shops that often must compete with larger shops or dealerships on the pay scale and benefits they can offer. That is why I think as a small shop owner, it's important for me to have strong employee benefits.

What I offer to my employees has evolved and grown as my shop has grown. I wanted to offer my employees health insurance, but I would have to cover the cost. Otherwise, no one would have opted into the plan, as they don't have the ability to pay \$300 to \$400 a month for health insurance. I started looking at what else I could offer them.

I started with offering a retirement investment plan, where they could put part of their salary in it and I would match their contribution up to 3%. Although I've had people come in to discuss financial literacy and the importance of saving for retirement, only one employee takes advantage of this.

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To enhance their retirement savings, I'm considering a life insurance policy with a built-in savings plan or scaling contributions to a retirement plan based on years of service. I'd contribute an additional 1% to their salary to the plan after the first year, 2% at five years, and 3% after 10 years. In the meantime, if any want to contribute from their salary, I would raise the percentage to match their contribution, not to exceed 3%.

I've also implemented supplemental benefits through Advantix Bridge Insurance Solutions, offering affordable options like life, disability, accident, cancer, critical illness, dental, and vision insurance. All employees participate in at least one offering, even though they cover the cost themselves. I also provide \$10,000 life insurance for each employee at a cost of less than \$60 a month for everyone, which is crucial after experiencing three employee (non-work-related) deaths in recent years.

I also offer the traditional benefits of one week of sick leave a year and one week of vacation time a year after the first year of employment. I then bump the one week of vacation time to two weeks once they have been with me for five years.

There are two other employee benefits that I offer at my small shop. I have talked about them before, but I think they are two of the most popular benefits I offer and do much for longevity of my employees. The first is we offer a \$10,000 retention bonus for every five years an employee stays with my shop. Thus far, I've paid out four of these retention bonuses, and they incentivize everyone in the shop because they see all of their hard work and loyalty is rewarded and I put my money where my mouth is. If you think \$10,000 every 5 years of service is a lot then look at the numbers. That's \$2,000 for every year they stay. I don't know what the cost is but if I lose an employee and then have to find another employee, train them, make sure they work well with my shop and I have to do that multiple times every few years then I guarantee I'm either losing that money in the transition or spending that money on the hiring and training process of the new employee.

I would rather set that money aside in a high-yield interest account and pay loyal employees for their hard work and loyalty to my shop.

Another popular benefit is our flexible work schedule, adopted a year ago, allowing employees to work four 10-hour days. I gave my employees the option and flexibility to basically create their own schedule, within reason. I made it clear to everyone when we made this change a year ago that if work was not completed then we would go back to a 5 day a week, 8 hour-day schedule. This change has boosted productivity and employee satisfaction, offering more time for personal responsibilities and family.

While I can't compete directly with larger shops, I prioritize employee happiness and well-being through comprehensive benefits. Retaining skilled employees remains my top priority, and though I'm still refining our offerings, our current approach seems effective in achieving that goal.

**Source:** [www.FenderBender.com](http://www.FenderBender.com)

**Article by** *Tiffany Menefee*

## WD-40, NAPA and TechForce offering \$50K in scholarships



WD-40 and NAPA have partnered with TechForce Foundation to offer \$50,000 in scholarships aimed at bolstering a new generation of trade professionals.

The number of tech school graduates has recently risen for the first time in more than 10 years, according to a news release from the companies. TechForce Foundation's 2023 Technician Supply & Demand report states that collision technician completions rose more than 5% in 2022 with an increase of 238 graduates.

However, TechForce also found that 795,000 new automotive, diesel, collision repair, aviation, and avionics technicians are needed to meet demand through 2027. That includes 110,000 collision techs.

"The automotive industry's future depends on the education and training of today's students," said Jamie Walton, NAPA merchandising executive vice president, in a news release. "This partnership with WD-40 Brand and the TechForce Foundation ensures we bring broader visibility and accessibility to technician careers."

Forty scholarships will be awarded over the next 12 months.

Applicants must be enrolled in a post-secondary automotive, collision, or diesel program.

"WD-40 Brand recognizes the critical role that the skilled trades play in driving America forward," said Erin Bala, WD-40 Co. U.S. marketing and Americas innovation vice president, in the release. "We are honored to join forces with NAPA in backing TechForce Foundation and its crucial mission to champion students to and through their education into careers as professional technicians."

As part of the partnership, NAPA will also provide discounted multi-use WD-40 through September.

"This cross-sector partnership demonstrates the value of industry coming together to demonstrate its commitment to powering the next generation of technicians," said Jennifer Maher, TechForce Foundation CEO, in the release. "By combining their support, WD-40 Brand and NAPA will unlock a multiplier effect that will allow our organizations to inspire and support more students together than we ever could apart. TechForce looks forward to collaborating with our partners to connect even more students to technician careers in an industry that urgently needs their skills."

TechForce is also accepting donations to fund scholarships. Its website states that roughly 7,000 scholarship applications are received from financially disadvantaged students each year but funds can only be provided to 1 out of every 4 students.

Source: [www.RepairerDrivenNews.com](http://www.RepairerDrivenNews.com)

Article by By Lurah Lowery

## ASE Education Foundation Names Winners of Michael Busch Memorial Scholarships

Collision repair students Jose Santos-Medrano and Dayne Van Dyke were recognized for their outstanding academic achievement.

The ASE Education Foundation announced that collision repair students Jose Santos-Medrano and Dayne Van Dyke have been awarded Michael Busch Memorial Scholarships for the 2024-25 school year. The two honorees received the scholarships in recognition of their outstanding academic achievement.

Santos-Medrano is from Reading, Pa., and attends the Automotive Training Center in Exton, Pa., while Van Dyke is from Iowa City, Iowa and is a student at Kirkwood Community College in Cedar Rapids, Iowa.

“We had many worthy candidates apply for the Busch Scholarships,” said Mike Coley, president of the ASE Education Foundation. “Jose and Dayne excelled academically and stood out as leaders in their schools and communities. It is our honor to award these scholarships in memory of Michael Busch, and we thank the University of the Aftermarket Foundation for their assistance with the administration of these scholarships.”

The Michael Busch Memorial Scholarships were created in memory of the son of a former collision shop owner and ASE board member, Jim Busch, who operated a shop in Issaquah, Wash., until his retirement. His son, Michael, was an automotive technology student who tragically lost his battle with cancer.

Each year, two scholarships are awarded to collision students in Michael Busch’s name. Qualified applicants must be graduating high school seniors or have graduated from high school or received a GED certificate. In addition, the applicants must be enrolled or planning to enroll as full-time students in two or four-year colleges or ASE-accredited post-secondary collision repair programs.

For more information about the Michael Busch Memorial Scholarship and other scholarships offered by the University of the Aftermarket Foundation, visit [AutomotiveScholarships.com](https://www.bodyshopbusiness.com/).

Source: <https://www.bodyshopbusiness.com/>

Article by Jason Stahl

***Jason Stahl has 30 years of experience as an editor, and has been editor of BodyShop Business for the past 18 years. He currently is a gold pin member of the Collision Industry Conference. Jason, who hails from Cleveland, Ohio, earned a bachelor of arts degree in English from John Carroll University and started his career in journalism at a weekly newspaper, doing everything from delivering newspapers to selling advertising space to writing articles.***



## ABAC EXECUTIVE OFFICERS 2024



**PRESIDENT**  
**BOB AMENDOLA**  
Autoworks of Westville - New Haven

**VICE PRESIDENT**  
**ASHLEY BRUNELLE**  
Autoworks of Westville - New Haven

**SECRETARY**  
**MARK WILKOWSKI**  
Stanley's Auto Body - Waterbury

**TREASURER**  
**MIKE WILKOWSKI**  
Stanley's Auto Body - Waterbury

**IMMEDIATE PAST PRESIDENT**  
**TONY FERRAILOLO**  
A&R Body Specialty - Wallingford

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