



Progress Through Partnership



by **Brian Cruickshank, AAP**

Under the banner of 'Progress Through Partnership,' Alfred State College's Automotive Trades program held an Automotive and Heavy Duty Industry Open House in September at its Wellsville, NY, campus.

But this was more than just a routine Autumn school open house. It tangibly demonstrated what can happen when a concerned distributor sees potential and value in helping a local educational program, bringing with it the power of the industry's often untapped resources.

The event brought together students, instructors and the industry in a unique two-day event designed to showcase Alfred State College's educational programs to the industry and expose its students to manufacturers and suppliers through panel discussions and a small booth show.

Multi-national WD and local store owner Uni-SelectUSA/MAWDI was one of the chief organizers of the event. For Uni-SelectUSA/MAWDI and its local division, Fred Roberts Auto Parts, partnering with educational programs such as Alfred State College pays future dividends for all parties involved.

"Alfred State College is developing the future of the industry," said Fred Roberts Auto Parts Area Manager Al Moshier, who helped spearhead the partnership with Alfred State College, and the subsequent open house event. "Quality education and training equal quality customers and quality employees. The partnership of Alfred State College and Uni-SelectUSA/MAWDI is one of the many keys to our future success."

It's no wonder Uni-SelectUSA/ MAWDI chose to partner with Alfred State. For more than 30 years, Alfred State has provided the kinds of hand-on, technologically sound educational programs the industry needs. Alfred's expanding automotive trades department offers associate degree programs in automotive service, heavy equipment, truck and diesel and auto-body repair. Each of these programs is ASE Master Certified by NATEF. It also offers an associate's degree in motorsports technology at its main campus in Alfred, NY.



Student Mark Knox, left, discusses classes with Alfred State instructor Mike Ronan.

Alfred's graduates, which come from as far away as New England and Michigan, are recruited by automotive businesses from across the country. Indeed, Alfred's success in training its students ultimately becomes the automotive industry's success.

At the event, Uni-SelectUSA/ MAWDI executive vice president Jim Buzzard shared his passion for supporting industry education through partnerships such as this. He said that the many challenges the industry faces can be solved through education.

"This industry offers tremendous opportunities for young people," said Buzzard. "But at the same time, we know we have challenges. Perhaps the greatest single challenge we face is finding the young people, the next leaders of our industry. Where are they going to come from? Where are we going to find the technicians of the future? Beyond that, we need parts people, managers and leaders of the future. We have to be proactive - and this is where it starts."

