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Baker College automotive services program
earns national reaccreditation

Local business pros key to program evaluation

LAKE CITY, Mich. – The automotive services technology program offered at Baker College's Center for Transportation Technology (CTT) has received reaccreditation valid through 2021 by the National Automotive Technicians Education Foundation (NATEF). The program continues to meet the requirements for NATEF Master Automotive Service Technology Accreditation – the organization's highest level of certification.

The accreditation includes Baker College's new semester format, which will be adapted fall 2017. The college currently offers courses on a quarter basis.

NATEF is a non-profit organization that aims to improve the quality of automotive technician training programs nationwide at secondary, post-secondary, public and proprietary schools. Its rigorous accreditation process takes about six months and evaluates the program against standards established by the industry.

"This reaccreditation is great news for automotive-minded young people and their parents," said Donald Seyfer, former NATEF chair. "Because this program increases cooperation between local education and industry leaders, it gives added assurance that Baker College graduates will be employable entry-level technicians."

One example of cooperation with local industry leaders played a key role in reaccreditation of the Baker College program. Five Cadillac-area automotive

professionals completed NATEF's required independent evaluation of Baker College's program curriculum, instructors, facilities and equipment.

"We are honored that five leaders in our community volunteered time to help meet NATEF evaluation requirements," said Mark Lagerwey, Baker College of Cadillac director of extension programs and services. "Plus, it's always encouraging to hear positive comments about the training Baker College provides."

Community leaders who volunteered two evenings' of their time were Chad Boolman, with Don's Auto Clinic; John Swanberg, Breidenstein Oil & Auto Service; Bernie Blain, Wexford-Missaukee Career Technical Center; and John Knapp, Fox Motors of Cadillac. Assisting was Baker College Program Coordinator Bruce Bradfield, who is a technician at Fox Motors.

"This program is much needed in this region," said Knapp. "It's difficult to find skilled technicians able to work on high-tech automobiles. We know Baker College graduates are going to perform well."

All instructors for the Baker College automotive services technology program are NATEF Master Automobile Service Technicians, certified in all eight NATEF categories.

The NATEF-appointed evaluation team leader was Gerald A. Lickey Jr., with Plymouth-Canton Educational Park's Advanced Automotive Training Center in Canton. Lickey gave the program good grades.

"The program has great class sizes, is well equipped and is in a new building, which is also in a great location to serve this community," he said. "Most of the tools are new and of the highest quality. The work-based-learning part of the program is exceptional and worthy of further expansion into high schools and the community."

Kelly Smith, Baker College of Cadillac president, said the program's continued success is important for students and for employers with jobs to fill that help boost the local economy.

"Gaining the Master level NATEF accreditation means our program is among the best in the country, and that is good for Northern Michigan," she said. "This allows us to educate students so they can excel in their careers, to provide needed job-ready employees to area employers and to help the economy to grow."

Baker College's CTT is located at 4800 S. Morey Road, Lake City, in Missaukee County, north of the junction of state routes 66 and 55.

For more information about the Baker College automotive services technology program, contact Cheri Sprik in the admissions office at 231.876.3119 or cheri.sprik@baker.edu, or visit www.baker.edu.

The largest private college in Michigan, Baker College is a not-for-profit higher education institution accredited by the Higher Learning Commission. Founded in 1911, Baker College grants doctoral, master's, bachelor's and associate degrees, as well as certificates in diverse academic fields including applied technology, business, education, engineering, health science, information technology and social science. Baker College has on-ground campuses throughout Michigan and offers online programs that can be completed 100 percent online without ever visiting a campus. In 2016, the Online Learning Consortium recognized Baker College Online with the OLC Quality Scorecard Exemplary Endorsement, the highest ranking for online higher education programs. For information, visit www.baker.edu or follow Baker College on Twitter, @bakercollege, or on Facebook, www.facebook.com/bakercollege.

About NATEF

The National Automotive Technicians Education Foundation was founded in 1983 as an independent, non-profit organization with a single mission: to evaluate technician training programs against standards developed by the automotive industry and to recommend qualifying programs for accreditation. The NATEF process has resulted in accredited automotive training programs in all fifty states at the secondary and postsecondary levels. For more information, visit www.asealliance.org.

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Photo caption

Baker-auto-services.jpeg - Baker College instructor Bruce Bradfield, of Cadillac, observes Christopher LaPointe, of Leroy, and John Wellman, of Traverse City, performing diagnostics on a vehicle's computer control system using a scan tool. LaPointe and Wellman are students in Baker College's automotive services technology

program that has received national industry "Master" reaccreditation, NATEF's highest level of certification.