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## **PCC automotive programs on display during state teachers conference Friday**

**PUEBLO** – Pueblo Community College’s state-of-the-art automotive program facilities and reputation as a center of teaching excellence will be showcased Friday (Oct. 5) when the College hosts the Colorado Automotive Teachers Society’s semi-annual conference from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. on the Pueblo Campus.

Dozens of automotive instructors and auto industry representatives from throughout the state and nearby region have registered to participate in the conference. It will kick off at 8 o’clock in the Automotive Technology program’s shop area, located in one of the north wings of the Medical Arts & Technology Building, with demonstrations and displays of equipment and textbooks by vendors and industry representatives.

At 9:30 a.m., the group will move to the College Center’s Fortino Ballroom for the remainder of the conference, which will begin with a welcome from PCC President Dr. J.D. Garvin. That will be followed by a number of auto industry presentations on the following topics:

- New EPA regulations
- Nitrogen generators for automotive tire applications
- New regulations on air conditioning recyclers
- Constant velocity transmissions
- Noise vibration and driveshaft balancing

The organization will have its business meeting from 2:45 to 4 p.m. It will be coordinated by Robert Maez, Automotive Technology program instructor at PCC and the newly elected president of the auto teachers group.

“This conference is where automotive service technology teachers from Colorado gather to have discussions on how to have stronger programs and to discuss state issues that affect automotive education and industry,” said Maez, who attended the spring conference in Salida.

PCC offers both Automotive Service Technology and Automotive Collision Technology programs that have associate degree, certificate and mini-certificate options, and the

College provides the 21<sup>st</sup> century skills that workers need for employment with auto dealerships, independent shops and other auto-related companies.

The Automotive Service program prepares students for a wide range of careers in automotive maintenance and repair service as well as service writing and parts management. The Automotive Collision curriculum prepares them for careers in structural and non-structural collision repair, refinishing, estimating, upholstery, paintless dent repair, glass installing, and custom body and refinishing.

Students can complete an associate degree in two years, but along the way they earn a new mini certificate in a specific competency area each semester. Skilled technicians are in such demand that many are hired for internships at an average of \$10 per hour during their first semester at PCC, allowing them to earn a good income while also attending school. The level of pay increases based on performance and experience.

PCC currently has 39 of its students working in Pueblo, and 35 of those are still attending the College. There is high industry demand for skilled workers nationwide, and automotive students who graduate from PCC can earn more than \$100,000 depending on their performance and in what area of the country they are employed.

Several special-length courses in the Automotive programs are offered this month and more are available in the spring semester that begins in January. For more information, call Jim Torres, who chairs the programs, at (719) 549-3249.

PCC's automotive programs are based on teaching excellence and are accredited by the National Institute for Automotive Technicians Education Foundation (NATEF). They also offer paid apprenticeship for high school students through the Automotive Youth Education System (AYES) program.

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*Founded in 1933, Pueblo Community College is a premier teaching institution focused on providing academic and service excellence to help its students acquire the 21<sup>st</sup> Century skills needed to better their lives. An educational and technological leader, PCC fosters economic development and utilizes strong partnerships in the communities it serves through its Pueblo, Fremont and Southwest campuses.*