Citywide Administrative Services | Fleet

NYC FLEET NEWSLETTER

Bill de Blasio, Mayor
Stacey Cumberbatch, DCAS Commissioner
Keith T. Kerman, Chief Fleet Officer

SEPTEMBER 18, 2014

ISSUE 62

HIGH SCHOOL AUTOMOTIVE INTERNS LEARN FROM THE BEST

MAHANTH S. JOISHY

This June through August, the Department of Education (DOE) worked with DCAS and the City Fleet agencies to offer hands-on internships at the City's 34 main municipal garages to juniors and seniors from public automotive high schools. In the last two years, 89 students participated in these internships as part of DOE's work-based learning program. The students received hands-on training from the City's professional staff of technical supervisors and mechanics, as well as exposure to some of the most advanced emergency and public works equipment in the country. Interns served at Police, Fire, Sanitation, Parks, and DCAS.

Every student gained practical work experience to add to their resumes. Students trained on a diverse array of vehicles including garbage trucks, sedans, vans, ambulances, fire trucks, forestry bucket trucks, and police cars. They participated in all aspects of repair including diagnostics, preventative maintenance, parts ordering, and electrical work. In some cases, students also learned fleet-relevant administrative work including how to use the City's new fleet management system (NYC Fleet Focus) for keeping work orders and assisting with pursuing affirmative claims for collisions.

In addition to the internships, DCAS also supported the City's Automotive Career and Technical Education Program through an agreement with DOE to assign City vehicles that are no longer in active service to be used for hands-on repair training. DCAS has assigned 13 City vehicles including the schools' first hybrid units, and we are finalizing details for the addition of 8 more units. These vehicles are being used for classes every day and students have the opportunity to take them apart and put them back together right at their home schools. DCAS is also supporting students through training initiatives, participation in industry council meetings, special events like the Annual Fleet Show, and helping increase students' awareness of civil service opportunities. For the first time, the Auto Service Worker exam offered in June 2014 gave experience credit to students with automotive high school degrees. Automotive students and faculty will also be participating in our Vision Zero Fleet Safety Forum on October 23, 2014.

This partnership has been successful thanks to the engagement and dedication of the fleet staff working at the various City garages and the coordinators at each of the technical high schools participating. "I am happy to report," said Renato Rosales, an instructor at Automotive High School in Brooklyn, "that all the supervisors have been praising the students who participated this summer. I spent a great deal of time coordinating daily with all the supervisors and mentors. It has been a positive experience for all."

Students seem to agree. "Working for the FDNY was an unforgettable experience. I learned many skills and tricks that can help me in the future. I had a great summer!" said Steven Vidal of Automotive High School.

Word is getting around at the schools. When I visited Alfred Smith High School in the Bronx this week, I was introduced to a classroom full of Freshmen. When I asked, "Who is interested in learning about working for the City?" every single hand in the classroom shot up. We hope the partnership continues for many years to come.