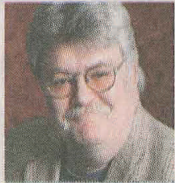


Ohio Technical College expands facilities and courses

If you're looking to pursue a career in automotive technology, either as a service or auto-body technician, one of the best schools in the nation is located right here in Cleveland. It's Ohio Technical College and it recently made a multi-million-dollar investment in its facilities to keep up with its growing enrollment.



Terry Troy

"We have gone from just over 300 students about eight years ago to over 1,500 students today," said Tom King, vice president, director of technical training and enrollment management for the school on Cleveland's near east side. "We have also greatly expanded our facilities. Our goal is to make this look and feel as much like a traditional urban college campus as possible to give our students the best possible environment for learning."

The school attributes a part of its enrollment increase to an increase in ex-military personnel who are enrolling, as well as its popular diesel program that has an 80-percent job placement rate.

To accommodate this increase in student enrollment, the college has added a second shift of classes in the afternoon. But it's also had to greatly expand its facilities.

OTC recently purchased six buildings adjacent to the main campus building, increasing the campus footprint to nearly two city blocks. That includes the new School of Welding, sponsored by Lincoln Electric, which opened in 2010.

"We realized that a campus expansion was essential to the growth of the college. It allows us to continue to offer our students the adequate working space that they are



Students from Ohio Technical College are at work on high performance vehicles.

accustomed to having," said Marc Brenner, president of Ohio Technical College. "The current design and atmosphere at the college is refreshing and upbeat, so we plan to carry out the same positive design elements in these new buildings."

OTC's new campus Resource Center on the corner of St. Clair Avenue and East 49th Street provides students with a recreational area and student meeting place. Three new buildings, which are located on the corner of Superior Avenue and East 49th Street, will become the future home of the OTC Alternative Fuel Program. They will also house fabrication buildings for OTC's Classic Car Restoration Body & Upholstery facility, which opened last month.

The new Edelbrock Performance Academy will be located on the corner of Superior Avenue and East 51st Street. OTC partnered with high performance parts maker Edelbrock, LLC

to create the Edelbrock Performance Academy. The program is designed to give students a solid foundation in the building and tuning of American muscle cars and performance vehicles. Classes begin in early 2012.

The school also purchased two buildings on the corner of East 51st and St. Clair that are currently under renovation. The first, which housed a karate studio, is a two-story building that will hold a transmission center on the first floor and an engine training center with classrooms and labs on the second floor, said King.

"The other building, which used to be the old City Desk Building, has four stories," King added. "The first floor will contain a new visitor center, as well as offices for our admissions and marketing teams. The second floor will be home to our new custom paint and graphics programs that have been dramatically expanded, as well as our new advanced airbrush



Marc (left) and Jordan Brenner represent the second and third generations of family ownership of Ohio Technical College.

techniques program, which is opening up after the first of the year. We are also greatly expanding our vinyl graphics and wrap programs, which will also be housed there."

The third floor will predominantly be a classroom area, while the fourth floor will be used as a much-needed auditorium, King added.

OTC has come a very long way in a relatively short amount of time. A family-owned school, OTC was founded in 1969 by Julius Brenner. It originally began as the Ohio Diesel Mechanics School, conducting six-week diesel driving and mechanical training courses in Cleveland's Warehouse District.

The school expanded in 1971 as the demand for diesel tech training grew at a rapid pace. The college relocated the educational facility to its current location to accommodate proper equipment.

Today, OTC is considered one of the top automotive technical colleges in the country.

Terry Troy is a freelance writer specializing in the automotive industry. Terry can be reached at Terrytroy@aol.com.