

\$5.7 million rolls into the shop

CCC AUTOMOTIVE DEPARTMENT EXPANSION HOLDS GRAND OPENING ON FRIDAY

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With the grand reveal of Clackamas Community College's new automotive expansion right around the corner, we went in for a first-hand look at everything this incredible revamp has to offer for the program. First off, anyone who has taken part in any automotive courses here will know that they have been waiting for this expansion for nearly 28 years, and with the grand total for the expansion coming to around \$5.7 million, it was well worth the wait.

The whole place is barely recognizable compared to what it looked like before; with the main garage nearly doubled in size, the program can now accommodate twice as many students.

This expansion didn't come a moment too soon, considering the growth that is expected in the industry. According to Nick Miller, an automotive instructor at CCC, there is to be a six percent increase in demand for trained technicians. With all-new lifts, tools and even classrooms, students will experience a comfier, more streamlined experience in the program, as before there was often a struggle to find enough space for everyone.

The program is now even providing students with tools — before this, students had to purchase and supply their own tools. Purchasing tools and paying tuition created a barrier to entry and caused students a harder time trying to gather everything they needed for the class. Miller went on to say, "We've been working on this since the bond measure in 2014."

Touring Barlow Hall, there was much that has been redone; with the expansion of the main garage, the collision course was able to move over a wing and get a big new space of their own. The high school course, which mainly consists of Oregon City students, also got a new space of its own. They were even able to give the parts department a small building to call home.

With brand new bathrooms, lighting, heating and cooling, new bay doors and a fresh coat of paint, it feels like an all-new school to those who have worked in those spaces before the renovations.

Jay Leuck, another instructor in the automotive department, said of the expansion, "I am very excited to be teaching in the new classrooms and shop area. We have already put the extra space to work by adding another day class and [we] are looking forward to growing our programs to fill the larger capacity that is available now."

So with the new expansion ready and waiting, now is the best time to go ahead and apply



A CCC student works in the expanded garage.



Students use the on-campus automotive workshop.

for the automotive program if it's something you've been interested in.

The expansion is scheduled to be formally revealed Friday at 3:30 p.m. Everyone is welcome to attend and see all the improvements they've

made; instructors and other faculty will be there to answer questions regarding the program.