

## BMW Joins AYES to Deal with Shortage of Auto Technicians

BMW has joined the roster of automakers supporting Automotive Youth Educational Systems (AYES) in its quest to reduce the shortage of skilled service technicians in the auto industry. Since AYES, a non-profit organization, was launched in 1995, more than 2,000 students have been placed in internships with participating dealerships, under the guidance of qualified mentors.

Tom Purves, chairman and CEO of BMW Holding Co., has been named to the AYES board. "There simply are not enough qualified service technicians to meet the demand and the industry must take an active role in recruiting and developing young technicians at the secondary school level" Purves said.

There is an estimated shortage of 65,000 skilled automotive technicians nationwide.

Other AYES sponsors include General Motors, Ford, the Chrysler Group, Toyota, Volkswagen, Audi, Honda, Subaru and the National Automobile Dealers Association. AYES is affiliated with more than 200 schools and nearly 2,000 dealerships in 35 states. That number is expected to increase by year end, with an additional 75 schools participating.

## Joining Forces to Educate African Americans on the Importance of Seatbelt Safety

The National Organization of Black Law Enforcement Executives (NOBLE), and the International Center for Injury Prevention (ICIP) have joined forces to conduct the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) Standardized Child Passenger Safety Training Program to NOBLE members throughout the country. Supporting this innovative initiative are African Americans On Wheel (AAOW) magazine and the National Association of Minority Automobile Dealers (NAMAD).

AAOW and NAMAD will provide a variety of efforts, including car/booster seat clinics at local minority-owned dealerships. The project also includes establishing car/booster seat fitting stations operated by NOBLE members and local technicians/instructors as well as providing a limited number of free seats to low-income families.

This initiative is an example of minority organizations partnering in an effort to address an important health crisis. Statistically, motor vehicle crashes are the leading cause of death for African Americans up to 14-years-old and the second leading cause of death for African Americans aged 15 to 24 (homicide is the No. 1). A significant number of these deaths resulted from the absence of, or improper use of child restraint devices.

The first training sessions will be conducted in Virginia with the assistance of the NHTSA and the Virginia Department of Motor Vehicle.

## Nissan Research Finds Limited Booster Seat Usage Among Ethnic Minorities

A survey of 400 African-American and 400 Latino drivers, conducted on behalf of Nissan's "Quest For Safety," a child safety seat program, found that parents and caregivers report high levels of car seat awareness and usage for younger children. But they reported much lower levels of booster seat awareness and usage for older children.

The survey revealed that about 87 percent of Black parents are aware of booster seats but only 16 percent use the seats for transporting children between four to eight years of age. About 53 percent of Black parents did not know booster seats should be used when a child is too small for a vehicle's seat belt, but too big for a child safety seat.

Among Latinos, about 58 percent of parents with children aged four to eight are aware of booster seats, but only 13 percent use them. About 68 percent of Latino parents who do not use booster seats say they secure the child using both the vehicle's lap belt and shoulder harness.

Booster seats are meant for children who weigh between 40 to 80 pounds and have outgrown their child safety seats but are too small to properly use the vehicle's seat belt alone.

For more details on this survey and other vehicle safety information, visit our Website at [www.onwheelsinc.com](http://www.onwheelsinc.com).

## Chevrolet Sponsors 27th Annual SBN Sports Black College All American Awards Weekend



Ronte Smith, regional sales manager of General Motors Atlanta (left) and Grambling University Head Coach Doug Williams (far right) present the SBN Doug Williams Offensive Player of the Year Award to Jacquay Nunnally of Florida A&M.



Ronte Smith, regional sales manager of General Motors Atlanta (left) and NFL Hall of Famer Mel Blount present the SBN Mel Blount Defensive Player of the Year Award to Larnard Mack, of Texas Southern University.

Chevrolet marked its 14th consecutive year as a major sponsor and scholarship provider to student athletes who play football for America's historically Black colleges and universities. The awarding of the Chevrolet Excellence in Education Scholarship took place during the 27th Annual SBN Sports Black College All-American Awards Banquet in March in Atlanta.

This year's event honored the 2000 SBN Sports Black College All-American Team, Tuskegee's Golden Tigers, who are the National Black