

The start of a Georgia state NACAT chapter?

In January 2006 at the TIEGA, (Trade and Industrial Educators of Georgia) meeting, 21 automotive teachers got together and proposed a Georgia automotive teachers organization affiliated with the NACAT. We had talked about it for years, the need was there, everyone wanted to have the organization and we finally did it! The first meeting was called to order, officers were nominated and voted on. With Michael Smith as President, Johnny Rickerson Secretary, Stephen Feilke Treasurer, and Sonny Reeves as State Director, we were on our way. Several put their money in, making donations to get the Chapter started. Kirk Vangelde of CDX Global was one of the first to recognize and support us with start up funds and several others matched his offer.

By early summer we had increased to 27 Georgia members and decided on fall 2006 as our first conference. With the aid of Doug Hulsey's NATEF certified automotive program at West Central Technical College, in Carrollton GA and some great industry partners, we were off and running.

An attendance of 65 at the conference included secondary and post secondary auto teachers and industry partners; such as Roger Ross and the Honda Team who provided us with a training work shop, a keynote speaker, and a Honda Factory tour in Alabama as a road trip to wind up a great conference.



Honda's team, left to right: Roger Ross, Scott James, and Rob Volk



65 Participants at Georgia's first annual NACAT chapter conference

Many industry partners volunteered their time and resources to make the first Georgia chapter conference a success. CDX's Kirk Vangelde provided a workshop as well as an evening meal for all of the Sunday evening participants.

ACDelco provided a workshop on Emerging HVAC technologies.



ACDelco representatives



Kirk Vangelde with CDX

SnapOn provided alignment as well as vibration analysis training.



SnapOnEquipmentTraining, left to right:-Mike Bell, John Turner, John McQueen, Chris Ellington



Mike Bell puts on a smokin performance while Chris Ellington makes a point.

Our industry partners developed a great trade show, as well as donating hundreds of dollars of merchandise in door prizes for the participating Georgia Automotive Educators.



An overall great first conference and first year with a bright future towards supporting our Georgia Professional Automotive Teachers.



State and National NACAT Officers, left to right: Sonny Reeves, Michael Smith, Stephen Feilke, and NACAT National Executive Manager, Dan Perrin