



2013 Dodge SRT Viper at Big 3's Innovation/Design event.

## Big 3 Show Area High School Students Potential Auto Career Opportunities

by Irena Granaas

Designers and engineers from GM, Ford and Chrysler were on hand June 4 to showcase some exceptional samples of their work at the "Where Innovation Meets Design" auto showcase at the Utica Center for Science and Industry (UCSI).

The automotive design reps interacted freely with Utica Community Schools and about 1,000 UCSI students from freshmen to seniors at the event, which included demonstrations of concept sketching and detailing by hand, and using software.

Event organizer Harry Istok, who retired from Malow Junior High School in Utica in 2012, said the annual auto showcase program began in 2006 as something for his drafting students.

The first automaker to participate was GM. Ford came on board in 2009, and Chrysler has been part of the event since 2012.

"This is the only event like this in the world geared toward K-12," said Istok. "We're very fortunate to have all of the car companies in the area."

Joe Dehner, head of design for Dodge and Ram, was one of the key designers attending the June 4 event at UCSI. Dehner said Chrysler brought 13 design concepts to the event and had 45 employees taking part.

Featured Chrysler vehicles on display included a 2013 SRT Viper, 2014 Jeep Grand Cherokee Trailhawk II concept, a 2013 Jeep Wrangler Stitch concept, a 2013 Ram Power Wagon and a historic 1964 Chrysler Turbine.

"We see it as an opportunity to make students aware of Chrysler design and engineering opportunities, not only with the cars but with our employees," he said.

Of the employees, Dehner added, "These aren't just pretty faces. These are the people who've actually worked on these concepts."

Chrysler, Ford and GM, had design staff members holding demonstrations inside the UCSI building for high school and junior high students from area schools, doing live sketching by hand and using software for both the interior and exterior auto design process.

"The kids are pretty impressed by that. We actually give them a chance to 'fly the plane,'" Dehner said.

He noted that Chrysler's participating isn't just something where they "come and go," but that the automaker works with major engineering and design schools like Lawrence Technological University and the College for Creative Studies in Detroit to help students determine what their options are if they are interested in pursuing a design or engineering career.

"We hope to hook the kids up with appropriate opportunities," he said.

Greg Cummings, GM group manager and superintendent of digital measurement, GM Design Fabrication Operations, said he

attended a parent-teacher conference at his son's school (Malow) and left with an idea, later launching the "Where Innovation Meets Design" auto showcase.

Cummings said this is one of several GM outreach programs. Some others are Career Day for Scholastic Arts Gold Key Winners, where GM works with high school and middle school students, and "You Make a Difference," where GM and the College for Creative Studies (CCS) works with Detroit Public School students.

"It's programs like these that help us connect with high school and college-level students, their parents, educators and counselors, to make them aware of scholarship opportunities and also the diverse career opportunities out there," he said.

Cummings added that while there's been much focus in the educational world on STEM subjects (science, technology, engineering and mathematics), kids with artistic talent have a place in the auto industry as well.

"All cars start with a sketch," he said.

Inside the UCSI facility, students watched short videos and live demonstrations. Creative Designer Everard Scott was one of the Chrysler staff members interacting with students in small groups, highlighting how he uses a powerful software program, Photoshop, in the process of creating new designs.

"I've been using the program since 2001 and I'm still learning new things about it," he told the students who were watching him work on a design concept on a digital flat screen.

Ford Chief Designer Greg Cummings said, "We think it's important, especially for young people, to know this career is out there."

"When I was in junior high and high school, I didn't know cars

## Classic Cars, Eats And Rock 'n' Roll At Golling Buick

Golling Buick-GMC of Lake Orion launches its official Classic Car Shows season Friday, June 21, from 5 to 8 p.m.

"This is a free event for all classic cars," said Bill Kokenos, Golling Buick-GMC volunteer and community coordinator. "We'll give away dash plaques to the first 80 classic cars to register. We'll also give out 50 cruiser trophies and we'll have food, 50/50 raffle, too."

Live entertainment will be provided by 2 b Gone, and Rock 'N' Ronnie will perform MC honors again this year.

All proceeds from the event will go to support the Lake Orion War Memorial.

"If possible, please bring one or two non-perishable food items that will be donated to the Oxford/Orion FISH Food Pantry," said Kokenos.

The dealership address is 1491 S. Lapeer Road in Lake Orion.



Ford Master Modeler Tom Drobek demonstrates sculpting on the clay model that evolved into the 2013 Ford Fusion.



The 2011 Chevy Sonic "Boom" concept was also at the event.

were designed by art students. I thought they were designed by engineers. I even went to engineering school for two years before I transferred . . . The funny thing is, my mother knew all along I needed to go to art school."

The half-day program definitely gave participating students food for thought. John Parke, 15, a freshman at Heritage Junior

High School in Sterling Heights, came away with a positive impression after checking out the cars. Parke also attends UCSI half-days.

"All of the cars are really new. I hope to own some of them one day," he commented.

Parke found the "Where Innovation Meets Design" program inspiring, noting, "It's definitely rekindled my love for engineering."

## 2013 Ram 1500 Captures Another Award

by Irena Granaas

The 2013 Ram 1500 just keeps adding to its trophy collection.

Chrysler is no doubt dusting off a new space for its latest award, after *Automobile* magazine named the Ram 1500 a 2013 Automotive All-Star, and among "The Best Cars in America," by its editorial staff for the third time in the past four years.

"The *Automobile* magazine All-Star award puts the 2013 Ram 1500 on top of other half-ton trucks in the market," said Reid Bigland, president and CEO - Ram Truck Brand, Chrysler. "This prestigious award doesn't just focus on new trucks but all current model trucks and we're proud to accept that honor."

For this year's awards, 16 editors and contributors voted for some 25 brands and 44 models. Eleven vehicles were chosen to have their names engraved on a 2013 All-Star trophy.

Testers for the magazine, maneuvering the Longhorn in and out of Houston traffic, cited the Longhorn's leather, with stitching "of European quality," real wood on the dashboard, extra comfortable seats and new "creature comforts" like the truck's backup camera, Garmin navigation and rain-sensing wipers.

"Despite its weight and girth, the 1500 handles admirably even in emergency maneuvers, as evidenced by our avoidance of a stray dog on a lonely Texas road," the editors commented. "This is due partly to the optional active air suspension . . . which keeps the chassis relatively level. At speed, you can feel the truck squat, and shutters in the grille close to improve the aerodynamics. This is not to say the Ram doesn't ride like a truck, but you don't have to manhandle it."

Ram Truck Communications



2013 Ram 1500

Manager Nick Cappa noted that this is not the first time this year the truck has won honors. In January, the Ram 1500 was named Truck/Utility of the Year by a panel of automotive experts at the North American International Auto Show in Detroit.

In May, Kelley Blue Book's kbb.com site included the 1500 among its "10 Vehicles with Attitude" list. In April, the Ram 1500 Laramie Longhorn also earned an award from *Wards Auto* for having one of the "10 Best Interiors for 2013."

Cappa said the latest honor from *Automobile* Magazine comes after the Ram 1500 has already won "a trifecta of awards."

"It's been great to work with a product that's been so successful." The 2013 Ram 1500 is chock full of examples, such as the thermal management system that enables essential fluids to heat up to full operating temperature quickly, giving the truck a gain in efficiency; and the pulse width modulation system that reduces unnecessary electrical draws from systems like the electronic fuel delivery system and the electric cooling fan, reducing the load on

## GM Establishes New Maintenance Program for 2014s

Customers who purchase or lease an eligible new 2014 Chevrolet, Buick or GMC car, truck or crossover in the U.S. will be covered by a new maintenance program that includes certain scheduled services for two years or 24,000 miles, whichever occurs first.

"This new plan will kick off our customers' ownership experience on the right foot and keep our strong sales momentum going," said Dan Akerson, General Motors chairman and CEO. Akerson announced the plan at GM's 2013 annual meeting of stockholders.

"We know that customers who service their vehicles at our dealerships are much more likely to purchase another GM product down the road," Akerson said.

"It's all the more important to bring customers to our service facilities for routine maintenance to further enhance the quality and reliability of their GM vehicles."

For most 2014 vehicles, Chevrolet, Buick and GMC dealers will complete an oil and filter change, four-wheel tire rotation, and conduct a 27-point vehicle inspection based on what's called for in the vehicle owner's manual maintenance schedule and oil life monitoring system.

The program covers up to four service visits in the 24-month period, and is fully transferable to subsequent owners. Customers who have already purchased or leased a 2014 model year vehicle will receive the scheduled maintenance program.

Cadillac vehicles beginning with the 2011 model year are already covered by the Cadillac Premium Care Maintenance Program, which covers scheduled maintenance services.

the alternator, which results in a gas usage saving by about 0.4 percent.

Cappa made it clear the great showing the truck has been making in various vehicle awards categories does not mean Chrysler will be resting on its laurels.

"We're not letting up at all for 2014 model, in fact we're going to bring in a diesel option . . . It will be the only diesel option in the industry (for a 2014 half-ton pickup)," he said, adding the Ram 1500 has been a leader in its segment for innovation.

"You've seen our air suspension, you've seen our eight-speed transmission - these are all things that we've done ahead of the competition, and they haven't even had a chance to catch up on what we've already accomplished, so we're making improvements on our own innovations already," Cappa said, "and diesel is just another example of how we're doing that."

He added that the Ram 1500 currently holds the best-in-class fuel economy title for 2013 at 25 mpg on the freeway, but the 2014 diesel Ram 1500 will beat that.