

LTU Partners with Johnson Controls
‘To Develop New Battery Technologies’
– JC Vice President MaryAnn Wright

Johnson Controls will partner with Lawrence Technological University to identify and validate new energy storage technologies within the total vehicle system.

Eric Pope, managing editor of the University News Bureau at Lawrence Tech, said the research will facilitate Johnson Controls’ ongoing efforts to help automakers meet fuel economy and emissions standards, help consumers save money at the pump, and deliver improved vehicle performance and functionality.

Johnson Controls will donate and install state-of-the-art test equipment and deploy technical resources to the university to propel academic and applied research into optimizing vehicle and battery design.

“We believe strongly in building the next generation of technical leaders through academic partnerships,” said MaryAnn Wright, vice president of Engineering and Product Development for Johnson Controls Power Solutions.

Wright had joined LTU’s board of trustees in 2013.

“Our partnership with LTU,” said Wright, “is an example of our commitment to developing new battery technologies. It is also an investment in both the future of academic research in energy management as well as the development of the talent pipeline for our industry.”

The partnership with Johnson Controls is part of a broader ef-

fort by Lawrence Tech to actively respond to the needs of its corporate partners with innovative academic and research programs that helps them prepare for the future, Pope said.

“We are helping corporate partners develop market-based solutions while providing highly talented students with real-world experiences and skills that positively impact the companies they work for,” said LTU President Virinder Moudgil.

“LTU is leveraging its faculty expertise and research facilities in energy storage systems, electrification applications, modeling and simulation, and vehicle testing to assist Johnson Controls in meeting its progressive research-and-development objectives.

“Strong industry relationships have long been the foundation of LTU’s theory-and-practice model of education. This corporate partnership with Johnson Controls signals a new era of applied research and systems engineering that advances our theory-and-practice model of education to a new level of engagement,” continued Moudgil.

“Our students will benefit from the real-world experiences and opportunities provided by Johnson Controls that will prepare them for great leadership positions in energy storage technology and management.”

Johnson Controls is a global multi-industrial company with core businesses in the automotive, building and energy storage industries.

February Sales Forecast Up

The relentless blast of winter weather likely kept car shoppers away from dealerships in January, says Edmunds.com.

Edmunds.com forecasts that 1,036,533 new cars and trucks will be sold in the U.S. in January for an estimated Seasonally Adjusted Annual Rate (SAAR) of 15.6 million. The projected sales will be a 23.6 percent decrease from December 2013.

January’s weather complications mean that sales will likely be made up in February. Fortunately, says Edmunds.com, car shoppers will find a friendly buying environment to make their big purchases.

“Even though 2013 year-end sales events have long passed, market conditions remain quite favorable for buyers,” says Edmunds.com chief economist Lacey Plache, PhD. “In particular, interest rates, monthly lease payments, and trade-in values are all at some of the best levels expected for the foreseeable future.”

Plache cautions that those strong buying conditions are bound to weaken. Auto loan rates, for example, are likely to rise in the near future, and trade-in values will likely soften as used car inventories grow.

Edmunds.com estimates that retail SAAR will come in at 12.9 million vehicles in January, with fleet transactions accounting for 17.3 percent of total sales. An estimated 2.89 million used cars will be sold in January, for a SAAR of 35.3 million (compared to 2.41 million – or a SAAR of 35.2 million – used car sales in December).

Edmunds.com estimates for January 2014 sales by volume have GM selling 176,541 this year versus 194,699 for the same time last year. It’s estimate for Ford has the company selling 155,819 in January 2014 versus 165,863 for the same period in 2013. Chrysler’s estimates show sales of 128,322 for January 2014 against 117,731 for January 2013.

The estimates, broken down by market share as opposed to sales volume, show GM’s share for January 2014 at 17 percent, which matches December’s sales figures.

The company’s share was 18.7 percent in January 2013. Ford’s market share in January 2014 is estimated to be 15 percent, versus 16 percent the year before. Chrysler’s share estimate is 12.4 percent versus 11.9 percent in 2013.

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