

Auto and Culinary Schools Hold Graduation Ceremony



Graduates of both schools pose for a group shot after the ceremony with automotive instructor Ed Netherland, far left in back row, and Richard Liebler, far right, who helped found the automotive program with NCC.



Marvin Adrichem at Firestone in Montclair, where he now works.

More than 20 graduates who completed their course of study for New Community's culinary arts or auto tech training programs received their certificates as proud family members and friends looked on during a recent ceremony at St. Rose of Lima Church.

Despite the economic slump, some of the graduates in this class have already found jobs. Tyrie Dawson, 29, who emerged as the top student in the 12-month Youth and Adult Automotive Training Center (YAATC) program, an initiative backed by Ford Motor Company, is now employed in the service department at DCH Montclair Acura, located in Verona.

"A lot of dealerships are laying off people so I didn't think I would get a job so fast," said Dawson, who actually started work back in December. A previous program graduate, Tony Uyinmiwen, also works there.

Meanwhile, graduate Marvin Adrichem, 30, has landed a job as an entry-level mechanic at Firestone in Montclair.

Ed Netherland, the senior instructor for the automotive program, told the graduates to "believe in yourself and apply your skills." The students train in a fully-equipped automotive center owned by NCC and

receive more hands-on instruction than similar programs in the area.

"Your automotive training has just begun. Keep up with the new technology or you will fall to the wayside," he cautioned.

Richard Liebler, the former owner of Hillside Auto Mall who started the program with New Community 14 years ago, commended Ford for putting more than \$1 million into the effort over the years to help train students who might not otherwise have the opportunity.

"I really respect these guys for the challenges they have had to overcome and congratulate them," he said.

When it was his turn to address the culinary graduates, instructor Jonathan Butler noted how his students worked so diligently. Two of the students, Ernest White and Kelvin Young, have been hired to work in the kitchen of NCC's Extended Care Center, a 180-bed skilled nursing facility in Newark. Samantha Williams, another graduate who held a certified nursing assistant certificate prior to entering the culinary arts program, now helps care for patients at the Extended Care Center.

Deborah Finnie was recognized as the top culinary student, with Butler noting that she nearly aced every test.