



ASE Education Foundation Board Chair's Message

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It is truly my honor to serve as the chair of the ASE Education Foundation. As an instructor myself, I have firsthand knowledge of the vital work the foundation does to strengthen the relationships between schools, instructors, students and employers. I view my role on the board as representing instructional programs and ensuring the foundation's work continues.

I had the pleasure of attending the ASE Instructor Training Conference in July and would like to thank all who participated. For the first time since 2019, we were able to meet in person and from all accounts, we had a tremendous conference. Over 500 attended the conference, which included over 100 technical update training sessions from 60 different industry partners, with automakers sharing information about their latest systems. Presenters also covered topics such as ADAS systems and calibration, electric vehicles and high voltage systems, and strategies for effective teaching.

A highlight of the conference, which people are still talking about, was the keynote presentation entitled "The 2 Percent Solution." It was a lively and informative panel discussion that focused on making training programs and workplaces more welcoming to everyone, including women and other underrepresented groups. The panel featured several female automotive service professionals, students and instructors.

The discussion focused on some of the challenges that women face in school and in the workplace, including the perception of not being able to do the job, not being taken seriously, being stereotyped into a certain job, and the lack of support from others. The conversation highlighted inequities that continue to harm our industry.

The panel and the audience provided a wide array of suggestions to help increase the number of women in automotive, truck and collision repair programs. The ideas included increasing shadowing opportunities, giving high school students the option to explore automotive classes to see if they like them, providing facts to potential students about the advantages of the industry and financial benefits they could achieve, creating a safe environment for students, eliminating the term "non-traditional", and working with administrators and counselors to encourage female students to participate in automotive programs.

We hope the instructors take some of those suggestions and share them with their fellow teachers and guidance counselors. Everyone who attended the conference panel wants to increase diversity in the workforce and work on solutions to increase the number of women and other underrepresented groups attending tech schools and taking automotive classes in high school. Our goal is to build the next generation of industry professionals by making industry education opportunities accessible to everyone and ultimately resolve the technician shortage.

We continue to work closely with our industry partners to help show students the solid career paths available in auto, truck and collision repair, as well as provide them with up-to-date technical education and real-world work experience. Our Adopt-A-School Program is a great tool to help businesses to get involved with their local schools. This online resource helps bridge the gap between businesses and schools, offering specific steps that employers can take to get involved, including becoming a guest speaker, judging student competitions and joining the school's advisory committee.

The Adopt-A-School program also provides information on implementing job shadowing and structured work-based learning programs for students. To learn more, please visit ASEducationFoundation.org/adoptaschool or contact your [ASE Education Foundation Field Manager](#) who can assist in connecting you with local businesses in your area that you can partner with.

We are also encouraging instructors to consider using the ASE Entry-Level Certification tests at the beginning of school year to assess students' knowledge. The test is often used by instructors at the end of a semester or program to measure achievement. However, giving the entry-level test at the beginning of the year as a diagnostic tool has great value in showing what the students already know individually and as a group.

As the ASE Education Foundation continues to focus on the technician shortage, we are also concerned about the instructor shortage. We are working on strategies to help schools develop and retain a new generation of instructors and we would welcome any suggestions you have to address this growing challenge. Please contact me or an ASE Education Foundation field manager directly to share these ideas.

Working with our industry partners, the ASE Education Foundation continues to be the leader in bringing industry and education together to help students enter and remain in the industry. On behalf of the ASE Education Foundation Board of Directors, we thank you for your support of the foundation and wish you all the best this school year.