

2-Yr. Colleges Improve Liaison Between Industry, Schools

ST. LOUIS, Mo.—By educating the next generation and expanding educational opportunities for present day generations, community colleges can provide all Americans with the educational flexibility needed to meet the challenging, changing times in which we live, a Ford Motor Company executive said.

Educators attending the annual convention of the American Association of Junior Colleges were told by Paul F. Lorenz, Ford Motor Company vice president and Lincoln-Mercury Division general manager, that the challenge America faces is whether two-year colleges can provide in adequate numbers the technicians and semi-professional workers needed by our expanding economy.

Providing America with people who are not afraid to work with their hands, who will not apologize for technical competence, who will serve the needs of others with dignity, and who are not afraid of "plain, old-fashioned hard work," is a major job of the nation's junior colleges, Mr. Lorenz said.

A further responsibility of community colleges, he said, is to improve the liaison between local educational institutions and local industry.

Lorenz noted that the automobile industry already has moved in this direction. He cited as one illustration announcement by the Ford Motor Company Fund of a scholarship to encourage students to enter the field of automotive technology.

The Ford Motor Company Fund, an educational, scientific and charitable organization financed by contributions from Ford Motor Company, will provide 100 two-year scholarships this year to children of company dealership employees for study of automotive technology at qualified community colleges.

A second example is the new Charles H. Patterson Technical Building at Henry Ford Community College in Dearborn, where a highly sophisticated technical training laboratory, equal to those in any industrial engineering center, has been equipped through the cooperation of automobile manufacturers.

Lorenz made it clear that he was not "recommending that junior colleges be turned into vocational training camps." But, he pointed to the danger of "a real tendency that community colleges and other educational institutions may fail to steer students into the terminal or occupational training programs in which they have an interest and in which they can become most productive citizens."

"Your schools should be proud of their vocational orientation and should not succumb to mere academic status-seeking in the purely abstract fields at the expense of technical education," Lorenz declared. He urged educators to direct the attention of their students to job opportunities in local industry.

The automobile executive said a nationwide spot survey of Lincoln-Mercury dealers emphasized "the big and challenging jobs awaiting the skilled and well-educated man." Key survey results were the following:

More than half the dealers surveyed had supported a community college in some tangible way, primarily through donation of automotive equipment for service technician training, and all expressed strong interest in junior colleges.

Ninety-seven per cent said they were eager to find and to hire junior college graduates.

Nine out of 10 had never received a job application from a junior college graduate, although they were in need of qualified employees.

Lorenz outlined the abundant opportunities for young two-year college graduates in automotive retailing. These jobs, as service technicians, parts specialists and salesmen, require great skill and intelligence, he said, listing representative examples:

It takes not only skilled men to design today's complex products, but equal and sometimes greater skill to service and repair them. An automobile mechanic needs a working knowledge of thermo-dynamics, hydraulics, and electrical engineering.

A car leasing specialist needs to be a financial expert with a working knowledge of economics, accounting and tax laws.

An automobile salesman needs all the qualifications of both the mechanic and the leasing specialist.

"In our industry, as well as other industries, we need our share of Ph.D.'s to conduct basic research and to handle the increasingly complex problems of pre-design and manu-

facture. But we also have a who have skill in, and knowledge of, production machinery, and selling fine products," said Lorenz.

Providing young Americans; our nation's schools, he noted, with these abilities is one of the basic challenges of education in down-to-earth, practical ability to think, to understand, an educated man."

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