

CHATTAHOOCHEE TECHNICAL COLLEGE

AUTOMOTIVE TRANSCRIPT

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Melodie Ross: I would say definitely. It's a great school to go to that you have a lot of support.

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Taylor Smith, Instructor: Electric vehicles is something that students and technicians and the industry, something that they're they're going to see.

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Brian Purtyman, Instructor: There's a lot of different avenues for people to explore. And I want them to know just because they're taking mechanics courses doesn't necessarily mean they're going to have an only option of being a mechanic. There's a lot of other different opportunities out there.

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Narrator: 98 Seven Chatt Tech, where 98.7% of our students earn a career. On this episode, we'll be learning all about the Automotive Technology program with current instructors, a graduate, and an employer. You'll hear about the new electric vehicle courses and how this propels into the state's tremendous EV business development. So let's grab our tools, rev it up, and get started.

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Taylor Smith, Instructor: My name is Taylor Smith. I am a automotive instructor at Chattahoochee Tech's Marietta campus. I've been here for almost ten years and we have a great program.

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Narrator: Okay. Can you give us a brief rundown of the automotive technology program?

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Taylor Smith, Instructor: Well, our program is a series of courses designed to help students master some some various skills so that it helps them be prepared to enter into a shop environment. So we teach an

introductory course that teaches the students how to use a lift. It teaches them hand tools, safety and shop safety and basic maintenance and light repair. And then we also have a series of other courses that teaches various areas within the automotive industry, such as electrical systems, brake systems, engine performance, suspension and steering, climate controls, engine repair, manual drivetrain and axles. And then we also have automatic transmissions course.

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Narrator: There's a lot going on there. So say a student is really ambitious. What else can they accomplish in this program.

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Taylor Smith, Instructor: If students want to learn additional skills? We do have some elective courses as well. So that could take a class like an internship. So basically a student's working in a shop environment and they earn college credit for the work experience as long as they follow along with the course. And they're working on a shop at the time that they take the internship course. And we also have a light duty diesel class teaching students about light duty diesel engines. And then we have some motorcycle classes and also some hybrid classes that they could take electric vehicle hybrid courses.

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Narrator: Instructor Smith, I'm glad you brought up electrical vehicles because we're going to talk about that in a few minutes. But let's ratchet this up and find out more from our other instructor.

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Brian Purtyman, Instructor: I'm Brian Purtyman. I'm an automotive instructor at Chattahoochee Tech in Marietta, and we are here to help folks learn how to fix cars and build some skill sets for themselves that can lead them to a very lucrative career throughout the years.

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Narrator: With working on cars, you can't just sit in class and listen to lectures the whole time in your classroom. How much of it is bookwork and how much is actually hands on?

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Brian Purtyman, Instructor: I say in my classes I probably do about 60% class time, 40% lab. It depends. We cover the basics. I put my classes out there in the lab. After we cover safety, I see if they can work

safely. If they can follow directions, then we'll up the ante a little bit and get into more and more involved repairs. Uh, if I find people not following the safety rules, we'll talk about it in class and we'll back off a little bit. So we definitely want to get them out there. We're hands on working on cars, but we also want to make sure that they know about tool safety, high voltage safety, uh, material safety, things like that.

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Narrator: No, we don't want anyone to get hurt. Thanks. Instructor Purtyman, we'll talk with you more soon. Now, let's get a student's perspective on the automotive technology program.

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Melodie Ross: Hi, I'm Melodie Ross. I'm a student at in the automotive program at Chattahoochee Tech. I currently work at Ed Volyes Dodge Ram Jeep.

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Narrator: You're almost done, aren't you?

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Melodie Ross: Yeah, actually, I got one more semester left. Fall is my last semester. I graduate in December.

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Narrator: So what made you want to enroll?

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Melodie Ross: I basically had tired of spending a lot of money to get my 2002 Jeep Grand Cherokee fixed, and it still wasn't fixed. And, uh, a lot of ways, in some ways it was, but I figured I could go to school and learn how to fix it myself.

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Narrator: I like that when all else fails, gotta do it yourself. Melodie, let's talk about your experience in the program.

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Melodie Ross: I definitely was uncomfortable because it's not my field. Uh, originally I came from. And I'm going into it as a midlife crisis career choice change, but I seem to do very well in it. There wasn't a lot of females when I first got into the program, and I'm starting to see more females in the programs. That's been really cool.

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Narrator: It's nice to know women are also excited about cars and to get their hands dirty. So what can you tell us about the instructors?

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Melodie Ross: Um, the teachers have been extremely supportive. I love how they they take the extra time to answer your questions, not just during class, but after class. And there's times where, you know, you have a question about your own personal car and, you know, they'll kind of go over some stuff and, you know, help you out, maybe some tools you need to get or instructions on how to get the problem fixed.

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Narrator: You have to learn on real cars. So there's a place to learn all of this on campus?

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Melodie Ross: We have what they call the lab, and we have a lot of a lot of vehicles, different kind of vehicles in there we get to actually work on. And, you know, sometimes we can use our vehicles, personal vehicles, as, you know, vehicles we can use to actually, you know, actually get to work on our own personal vehicles, but also to just kind of to see like a real life experience, like, okay, this is a car that obviously, you know, a hundred students are not working on. This is just my personal car. And this is what the issue is. And maybe we can, you know, diagnosis it. Fix it at the time so you get, you know, some real world, hands on experience.

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Narrator: Hands on experience, and getting your personal car fixed. That's a good deal. I want to talk about jobs now. Did Chatt Tech help you find your job?

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Melodie Ross: Um, yes. Actually, I found out about Ed Voyles from a job fair they actually had on campus, so that was kind of like a nice little leeway. And, you know, I already had kind of like a connection there between those dealerships and, and the school. So they were the first ones I went to.

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Narrator: Easy as that. Melodie, I have to know what you would tell someone thinking of enrolling in the automotive technology program?

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Melodie Ross: I would tell them it is an amazing program. There's so much support and it doesn't matter if you're just coming into the industry or you've been in it for a while, there's always something that you can learn, whether it's from the instructors or even some of your own classmates. You know, I've had some some of my classmates, you know, come over to the house and we worked on our cars, you know, in my driveway, which has been really cool, but and definitely have made some lifelong friends and, you know, bouncing off of that. But I tell them this is an opportunity to get your foot in the door and, you know, work with some of the best tools, um, in the industry right now. And just don't think that you have to do this by yourself. You know, there's always support there for you and there's always something to learn. You know, even the instructors sometimes learn stuff from the students. So that's nice.

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Narrator: Thanks, Melodie. Let's keep on truckin' or... car-in', let's meet our employer.

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Todd Wilson: I'm Todd Wilson. I'm a graduate of the Chattahoochee Tech Automotive Program, 2002 from the Acworth campus, uh, previously North Metro Tech. I've been in the business since 2001. I worked at the BMW dealership for nine years. I worked at an independent for four and then in 2015 started my own business, Bavarian Repair in Woodstock. We serviced BMW and Mini Coopers. I've been doing that for the last nine years. It's been good, a lot of challenges. I do like to work on cars, the diagnostics, the um, talking to the people, helping them out.

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Narrator: A lot of talent comes out of Chatt Tech. Do you hire grads?

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Todd Wilson: I do hire, uh, Chattahoochee graduates. I believe in the last nine years, I've hired five Chattahoochee Tech grads. I currently have one with me. Several have come and gone. I had another guy that was with me for five years. I like going to the college and talking to the new students and, you know, trying to inspire them and see that they don't have to go to the dealership. They can go to an independent and learn these things.

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Narrator: What are some of the opportunities in your business?

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Todd Wilson: Um, there's lots of different opportunities in this business, whether it's a dealership technician, independent shop, fleet maintenance, uh, service advisor, part sales guy, manager, service manager, lots of different opportunities in this business.

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Narrator: Todd, I want to talk to you more in just a minute. But, Instructor Smith, we need to talk about some of the electric vehicle courses offered at Chat Tech.

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Taylor Smith, Instructor: Yeah. So we have a couple classes geared towards electric vehicles such as EV batteries, EV safety protocols, powertrain systems. We actually got a couple classes. So if a student comes here and they take courses and they want to learn more about the EVs, they can take those classes specifically. And it teaches all about the electric motor systems, a little bit about diagnosis, a little bit about the battery packs, how to properly service them safely, because that is a big thing with, uh, with electricity, as we want to be safe in that working environment. So it teaches the students how to properly navigate those systems and diagnosis.

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Narrator: Are you actually teaching on electric vehicles? If so, what models?

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Taylor Smith, Instructor: The exciting thing is we got a couple new electric vehicles specifically for that course. So we have a new Tesla model three. We also got a Mustang Mach E specifically for that course.

And then we're trying to get a couple other vehicles in addition to that. But it's an exciting courses. Electric vehicles is something that students and technicians in the industry, something that they're they're going to see and to work on them. Again, you want proper training. You want to know the safety hazards and how to properly address those vehicles. That way you do it in a safe manner and you know, nobody, nobody gets hurt.

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Narrator: Can you list off some of the courses available for EVs?

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Taylor Smith, Instructor: We have EV, like I said, introduction, safety protocols. We got batteries and powertrains. We also have a battery and powertrain service course and then a vehicle body chassis. And HVAC and supporting systems course as well. So, you know, if a student wants additional training on those EVs, we have courses that they can get an additional certificate for that on top of their diploma or on top of their associate's degree. So we do have, uh, some additional classes that they can take on top of the classes that they've already taken at Chattahoochee Tech. They're really designed for graduating students getting into them, or even industry that wants to come back in for training. So let's say there's, you know, maybe a student has already graduated. They've been graduated two, three, four years and they want some additional coursework on on EVs. This is designed for individuals to be able to come back as well and take some additional courses if they want to.

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Narrator: Electric vehicles are prominent now. Instructor Purtyman, can you elaborate more on the EV courses that Chatt Tech offers?

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Brian Purtyman, Instructor: The electric vehicle program at Chat Tech is very important to technicians because we have to start with safety. So this is not like the gasoline cars that most of us are familiar with. Uh, where you can kind of tinker under the hood. You need to start with, uh, high voltage safety. And we stress that very strongly, and you need to learn some theory behind it as well. So you know exactly what you're messing with, what you're getting into when you start to service these vehicles. And so this a program that's very much in demand. We talk to a lot of service advisors and service managers around Atlanta from different dealerships and shops. And they tell us they want technicians who are comfortable using a volt meter and know their way under the hood of an electric vehicle.

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Narrator: Okay, so back to Todd, the owner of Bavarian Repair. How are you using EV technology at your shop?

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Todd Wilson: Uh, at Bavarian Repair, we do work on the electrics, of course. Uh, BMW electrics really started in 2013, 2014 with the i8 and the i3, um, which were not a mass produced vehicle on the scale of, say, General Motors or, you know, Ford, Toyota. Um, but we are starting to see those. I do have a couple of guys that are trained, uh, dealer trained in the, uh, BMW and also the mini, mini Cooper, uh, hybrid and electric lines. Uh, we are planning on staying up to date and current on that technology. I do believe that the the electrics are going to play a big part of our future, and I don't want to get left behind. Uh, the same way that Chattahoochee Tech is, has just launched their new, uh, electric vehicle training classes to really see it as the future.

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Narrator: Electric vehicles are the future. Instructor Purtyman , I want to get your final thoughts on the automotive technology program.

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Brian Purtyman, Instructor: I want to say at Chatt Tech. We embrace nontraditional students as well. So I've taught people who have had a 30 year career in banking, and they've always wanted to learn about cars, and now they're retired and this is their chance. This program is also for people who might not want to do this professionally, but they just want to be the family mechanic and save their family a lot of money. This is for people who want to possibly do this as a side hustle on the weekends, have their own shop, things like that. So we we embrace nontraditional students. You don't necessarily have to be a mechanic to be in automotive technology. There's service manager opportunity service writing opportunities. There's a lot of opportunities in the parts industry as well. Uh, cars can't get fixed without parts. So there's a lot of different avenues for people to explore. And I want them to know just because they're taking mechanics courses doesn't necessarily mean they're going to have an only option of being a mechanic. There's a lot of other different opportunities out there.

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Narrator: Chatt Tech, the College of Real World training, and how our communities are stronger and better. Thanks to the thousands of Chatt Tech graduates in our local workforce. For more information about the Automotive Technology program at Chattahoochee Tech, visit Chattahoochee.tech.edu. And thanks for listening to 98.7 Chat Tech, where 98.7% of our students earn a career.