

Clark Automotive Hosts Students from France



Led by Clark automotive professor Dannie Nordsiden, the automotive department welcomed nine students from CFA de la Mobilité, a vocational training center in Strasbourg, France.

Over several days, these high school-aged students toured Clark's 14,000-square-foot automotive facility, met with faculty, staff, and local students, and gained firsthand insight into the college's innovative "Dealer Ready" apprenticeship programs.



Retired Professor Mike Godson hands the book to Roxane Adler.

When Mike Godson, former head of the program, pulled out the textbook he wrote, *Hybrid, Electric and Fuel-Cell Vehicles*, the visiting students laughed in recognition. They use that textbook, too, all the way in France. They were extra excited that they now got to meet the man behind the words.

The visiting students, all in their final year of study at CFA de la Mobilité, are enrolled in a specialized auto training program. They were accompanied by two instructors: Roxane Adler, who leads the International Apprentice Mobility program and teaches history and literature, and Mikael Osterstock, an automotive maintenance instructor.



Left to right: Mikael Osterstock, CFI automotive maintenance instructor; Clark automotive professor Dannie Nordsiden; and Roxane Adler, who leads the International Apprentice Mobility program and teaches history and literature.

The CFA de la Mobilité group is on a 10-day tour of the Pacific Northwest. “The most valuable element was meeting Dannie, who welcomed us so well,” said Adler. “We sincerely hope to see him again and develop a wonderful partnership with Clark College.”

Exploring Hands-On Learning at Clark



On Wednesday morning, Professor Nordsiden accompanied the group to several local partner dealerships. There, the students had the opportunity to speak with professional technicians about careers in the automotive field and learn more about Clark's unique approach to hands-on training. The "Dealer Ready" model allows students to earn income and gain work experience through paid internships while completing their degrees.

During their visit, the students also learned that Clark's automotive programs are structured as apprenticeships, requiring students to work part-time in a professional repair setting while attending three days of in-person instruction in the college's labs each week. This hybrid model ensures students apply classroom knowledge in real-world environments throughout the Vancouver-Portland metro area.

CFA de la Mobilité also has a similar partnership with Renault preparing students for careers with the international automotive manufacturer.



Here's what our French students have to share from their visit:

- The American diagnostic system is different because “it has more details and provides more detailed instructions.” The visiting students enjoyed practicing on the vehicles and troubleshooting together.
- The workshops are “larger and different, especially in terms of equipment like the wheel balancer.”
- What they enjoyed most was the human interaction, “both the instructors and the students were very welcoming—with whom we loved talking to and working with.”

“This visit reflects Clark’s ongoing commitment to global collaboration and career-focused education,” said Nordsiden. “This cultural exchange aligns the college’s general education competencies, ‘Civic and Global Consciousness,’ with our classes, by providing a look into our trade from another

lens. In short, it allows our world to get a little smaller—and our knowledge a little broader.”

About CFA de la Mobilité

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Learn more about CFA de la Mobilité at www.cfamobilite.fr.

About the Clark College Automotive Technology Department

With a program history that spans more than 40 years, Clark College's Automotive Technology department has received community recognition for producing top-tier automotive

technicians and for its focus on hands-on learning and partnerships with dealerships that include Toyota, Dick Hannah, and Audi.

Learn more about Clark's Automotive Technology programs at www.clark.edu/cc/auto.

Photos: Clark College/Jenny Shadley