

For Immediate Release

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Bridgestone Extends Partnership with Maplewood High School Automotive Training Center on Program's Fifth Anniversary

- **Since 2015, Bridgestone and Maplewood High School have responded to a nationwide technician shortage by preparing Nashville students for careers in the automotive service industry.**
- **Bridgestone's partnership will continue through 2023 and includes ongoing support of the simulated Firestone Complete Auto Care store located at Maplewood High School.**
- **As a result of COVID-19, this year's hands-on program has gone virtual with curriculum support from Bridgestone.**

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (Oct. 12, 2020) – [Bridgestone Americas](#) (Bridgestone) announced it has extended support for Maplewood High School's Automotive Training Center through 2023. The extension coincides with the program's five-year anniversary and will ensure Nashville students continue to have access to the skills needed to pursue careers in the automotive service industry. Since 2015, more than 110 students have graduated from Bridgestone's Automotive Training Center at Maplewood High School, and 39 students have accepted positions working at one of more than 13 Nashville-area Bridgestone Firestone Complete Auto Care stores.

Maplewood High School's Automotive Training Center, the heart of the Automotive Technology pathway in the Maplewood Academy of Entrepreneurship and Innovation, was developed by Bridgestone and Metro Nashville Public Schools (MNPS) in response to a nationwide shortage of automotive technicians. At the heart of the four-year program is an onsite, fully-functioning Firestone Complete Auto Care tire and automotive service store, complete with fixtures, equipment and point-of-sale software. The program gives students an opportunity to interact with customers and practice the skills they've learned in the classroom such as oil changes, brake replacements and tire rotations.

"When we began our partnership with Maplewood High School five years ago our goal was to invest in the futures of young men and women who are interested in careers in the automotive industry," said Chris Karbowski, vice chair, chief administrative officer, chief

risk officer and executive vice president for Bridgestone Americas. “Today the program has taken on a new meaning as students search for ways to continue to pursue these critical, hands-on skills amid our global pandemic. We are proud to recognize the hundreds of graduates who have charted a path forward through this program over the past five years, and we look forward to continuing to support the next generation of automotive service professionals.”

Donna Gilley, director of the Academies of Nashville for Metro Nashville Public Schools, agreed noting that the center provides students with “a tangible future career path.”

“Bridgestone is an invaluable partner that has poured time and talent into our students for the last five years, and we feel very lucky to say that such a partnership will continue for at least three more,” said Gilley. “The Automotive Training Center is much more than the beautiful equipment and excellent resources, it is a testament to the impact of hands on learning and having the skills to attain employment after high school. When students can see possible career paths, use the literal tools of the trade, and learn from professionals in those roles, they are able to envision themselves in that profession.”

Although the Maplewood Automotive Training Center is currently closed due to COVID-19, students in the automotive program are receiving virtual training from teacher TJ Williams, who is also a part-time Bridgestone employee. Students continue to remotely learn the skills it will take to become a Customer Service or Vehicle Service technician at one of 2,200 Bridgestone Retail Operations stores nationwide.

For more Bridgestone company news, visit [Bridgestone Americas.com](https://www.bridgestoneamericas.com).

About Bridgestone Americas, Inc.:

Nashville, Tennessee-based Bridgestone Americas, Inc. is a subsidiary of Bridgestone Corporation, a global leader providing sustainable mobility and advanced solutions. Bridgestone Americas develops, manufactures and markets a diverse portfolio of original equipment and replacement tires, tire-centric solutions, mobility solutions, and other rubber-associated and diversified products that deliver social value and customer value. Guided by its global corporate social responsibility commitment, Our Way to Serve, Bridgestone is dedicated to improving the way people move, live, work and play.

About Metro Nashville Public Schools:

Metro Nashville Public Schools is one of the nation’s 50 largest school districts, preparing students for higher education, work, and life. With the goal of being the first choice for Nashville families, Metro Schools is committed to the mission of delivering a great public education to every student, every day. For more information, visit [MNPS.org](https://www.mnps.org), and follow us on Twitter @MetroSchools and on Facebook and Instagram /MetroSchools.

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