

On Wednesday, students and faculty from the automotive technician program at UEI College in Oceanside will host a free community car care event. Students and instructors will provide a 14-point inspection of vehicles, with representatives from auto repair and tire vendors on-site should any vehicles need additional attention. The Oceanside Police Department will also have officers on-site to ensure child car seats are properly installed. Oceanside Mayor Esther Sanchez will kick off the event, which starts at 9AM.

WHEN: Wednesday, August 28, 2024, from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

WHERE: UEI College, 2027 Mission Avenue, Oceanside, CA, 92058

The event provides a great backdrop to do a bigger story about the ongoing demand for new graduates in the skilled trades. For example, the demand for trained automotive technicians in San Diego County is projected to remain strong in the coming years. Specifically, the region is expected to need approximately 744 new automotive technicians annually. This includes both new positions and replacements due to turnover and retirements. The steady demand is driven by the continued growth of the automotive service industry in the area, with a particular need for technicians skilled in modern automotive technologies, including electric vehicle maintenance. SOURCE: [Labor Market Research Centers](#).

This could be an opportunity to do a local version of a recent NPR story about the so-called “toolbelt” generation: <https://www.npr.org/2024/04/22/1245858737/gen-z-trade-vocational-schools-jobs-college>. There is a shortage of skilled trades workers in California, and at the same time, many young people are concerned about the escalating costs of going the traditional college route. So, they opt for career or vocational training rather than a 4-year degree, offered at schools like UEI College.

At the event on Wednesday, you can speak with students about their decision to pursue an automotive career. Some of the students that I know will be there have interesting stories, including a single mom who wanted to work with her hands rather than continue in retail; a Navy veteran who wanted to put his military experience to use as a civilian; and a former convict who has turned his life around and wants a path to a better future through education. Many of our students have overcome significant obstacles. Of course, there are a number of students who come to UEI right after high school as well.