



Included below is a press release regarding the naming of Ben Upham, a Ferris State University professor in the Automotive department, as instructor of the year. Any questions can be directed to Sandy Gholston, marketing specialist in Marketing and Communications through information provided below. Also, attached is a mugshot of Ben Upham.

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Ferris' Upham Named Instructor of the Year

BIG RAPIDS – Ferris State University's Ben Upham, a graduate of the university and an associate professor in its Automotive department, has been named the National Institute for Automotive Service Excellence/National Automotive Technicians Education Foundation Instructor of the Year.

Upham will be among more than 30 technicians to be honored as part of an awards dinner at the Cottonwoods Resort in Scottsdale, Ariz., on Nov. 17. He plans to attend with his wife, Jennifer. Upham emerged from a nationwide pool of candidates as the choice for ASE/NATEF Instructor of the Year due to his strong performance on ASE tests taken during the last year. Humble by nature, news of this recognition from a Ferris colleague pleasantly surprised him.

“It is quite an honor for me and a surprise to be recognized for this achievement,” said Upham, who was informed of the honor by Greg Key, Ferris' director of the School of Automotive and Heavy Equipment. “This honor wouldn't be possible without the work of our whole department. The people in our department have put in a lot of time and effort to get our program certified through NATEF. I owe a lot of this honor to my colleagues for their hard work.”

Upham earned his associate degree in Automotive Technology in 1988, a bachelor's degree in Technical Education in 1992 and a master's degree in Career and Technical Education in 2004 – all from Ferris.

“My educational background prepared me largely because Ferris' educational philosophy is hands-on which allowed us to work on pretty much everything,” Upham said.

Already with two academic degrees and automotive industry work experience, Upham returned to Ferris in 2000 as an assistant professor and six years later became an associate professor. Classroom instruction and extensive lab work have served as the platform for Upham to educate and train the next generation of technicians to graduate from Ferris. The education, however, is not restricted to his students. Upham relishes opportunities to strengthen his own knowledge

base.

“One of the main reasons I got into teaching was because I needed to know how things work. Education was the thing I felt was going to allow me to do that,” said Upham, a native of Napoleon, located southeast of Jackson. “Through teaching here on a college campus, I have the time to do research on parts and components to help me better understand things and to help better train our students.”

Upham loves the well-rounded experience Ferris students receive. He pointed out that Ferris’ Automotive students devote 50 percent of their learning to classroom activities and 50 percent to hands-on experience on the service floor where they work on repairs of the vehicles of real customers.

“It’s a lot of fun because we will talk about things in lecture and I will say ‘you need to look out for this’ and then we get into lab and students have that knowledge and they get those valuable experiences,” Upham said.

NATEF is an independent, non-profit organization dedicated to evaluating technician training programs against standards developed by the automotive industry and to the recommendation of qualifying programs for certification by ASE. ASE’s mission is to improve the quality of vehicle repair and service through the testing and certification of repair and service professionals.



Ben Upham.JPG



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