

Tech Center News

31201 Chicago Road South
Warren, Michigan 48093
586-939-6800

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William Springer II, publisher
and interim news editor;
Lisa A. Torretta, operations

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2013 Fusion Earns Best Family Vehicle

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The two rallies feature up to 100 vehicles for participating journalists to drive and evaluate.

A field of 79 automotive journalists propelled the Fusion into the number one slot. With 17 first-place votes and 78 total points, the Fusion edged out the 2013 Honda Accord (62 points) and the 2013 Mazda CX-5, (59 points).

In each round of voting, three points were awarded for a first-place vote, two for second and one point each for third.

Other vehicles among the final 10 contenders after voting took place at each rally were the 2012 Buick Verano; 2013 Cadillac ATS; 2013 Dodge Dart; 2013 Ford Escape; 2013 Hyundai Azera; 2013 Hyundai Santa Fe Sport and 2013 Nissan Altima.

"I think the new Fusion is certainly a beautiful car," said Bell. "It brings a sense of style to the mostly mundane mid-size car market."

'Home in Macomb' Program Honors Local Businesses

by Ross Raybin

Four Macomb County businesses were recently recognized for their contributions to the community and are now being touted as leaders in their respective industries.

The businesses were honored during the first-ever Macomb Business Awards, held Feb. 12 at the Sterling Inn Banquet and Conference Center in Sterling Heights.

"This was our first year doing this," said Stephen Cassin, Macomb County Planning and Economic Development executive director. "We feel we have to honor our own."

Roughly 50 companies were nominated to win a crystal award and representatives for each were on hand.

Four categories – efficiency, workforce development, diversification and corporate citizenship – were up for grabs with one winner in each.

"We had a panel of judges who independently graded the nominees and submitted those scores," said Cassin. "That's how the winners were selected."

The judges included Dr. Jim Jacobs, president of Macomb Community College, Cindy Goodaker, executive editor for *Crain's Detroit Business* and Gene Lovell, president of Macomb County's First State Bank.

Among the honorees were General Dynamics Land Systems of Sterling Heights, Omega Plastics of Clinton Township, Fori Automation of Shelby Township, and IBEW-NECA Electrical Industry Training Center of Warren.

General Dynamics Land Systems received the Energy Efficiency Expert award for their efforts to reduce consumption by 20 percent.

Omega Plastics took home the Corporate Citizen award for al-



From left, Fox 2's Huel Perkins; Fox Sports' Mario Impemba; Mike Pavlica, Omega Plastics; Paul Meloche, Fori Automation; Richard Gillette, General Dynamics; Gary Polulak, IBEW-NECA; County Executive Mark Hackel.

lowing its facilities to be used by some nonprofit organizations.

Fori Automation received the Diversification Leader honor for expanding its reach beyond the automotive industry.

IBEW-NECA Electrical Industry Training Center received the Champion of Workforce Development award for its apprenticeship program.

"It's nice to be appreciated and to be able to encourage others," said Mike Pavlica, vice president of Omega Plastics, "We were very surprised and honored to receive the award."

The company has been located in Clinton Township since its beginnings in 1984 and Pavlica said their motto is "To do great work so that we can do good works in the community."

"It's an honor to be recognized as a leading business in Macomb County," said Mike Beck, vice president of Fori Automation. "This award was in response to a goal to diversify our operations in the non-automotive area."

The company has branched out

from the auto industry and started producing products for the aerospace, agriculture and recreational vehicle industries.

"Automotive is still our backbone," said Beck, "but like many other companies, the goal is to diversify."

Macomb Community College was also recognized and received the 2013 Economic Development Partner of the Year award for its partnership with the county that goes back almost 25 years.

The awards are part of the "Home in Macomb" business retention program, started in November 2012.

"The idea is to provide services to businesses to keep them here," said Cassin, "We thought it would be nice to recognize them."

There are approximately 18,000 businesses in Macomb County and they combine to employ 287,000 people.

According to a press release from the Macomb County Planning and Economic Development Department, roughly 250 people attended the awards ceremony, in-

cluding Macomb County Executive Mark Hackel, WJBK-TV Fox 2 anchor Huel Perkins and Fox Sports Detroit's Tigers play-by-play announcer Mario Impemba.

Perkins served as the master of ceremonies for the event and Impemba was the keynote speaker.

Library Workshop Set to Offer Free Legal Advice

The Legal Aid and Defender Association will present a free workshop Wednesday, March 6, at 6 p.m. at the Civic Center branch of the Warren Public Library.

Workshop attendees will be able to ask questions and get advice on how to represent themselves in Small Claims Court.

The Civic Center branch is located at 1 City Square, on the first floor of the Warren Civic Center. Entrance is off of Van Dyke about a half-mile north of 12 Mile Road.



Melissa Howell

How Firms Keep Good Employees

Automation Alley is holding a seminar on Wednesday, Feb. 27, titled, "Hire and Keep that Elusive 'Ideal' Employee."

This event will kick off a six-session series on "Hiring and Keeping the Perfect 'Ideal' Employee."

Future topics will include writing a realistic job description, resources for recruiting, interviewing, onboarding and managing the generation gap in the workplace. Dates for the future sessions will be announced at a later time.

According to presenter John M. Jones, director, business leader – Talent & Rewards, Towers Watson, "Organizations are running 21st century businesses with 20th century workplace practices and programs."

The cost of attending is \$20 for members who pre-register, \$30 at the door. Non-members pay \$40, but must pre-register at least two days prior to the event, which will be held in the group's offices at 2675 Bellingham in Troy from noon to 1 p.m. Sign-in and networking starts at 11:30 a.m.

For more information on the event, call 1-800-427-5100, or visit www.automationalley.com.

GM Appoints Melissa Howell as VP, Global Human Resources

General Motors has appointed Melissa Howell as vice president, Global Human Resources, effective immediately.

Howell has more than two decades of experience in GM Human Resources, supporting manufacturing, sales, marketing, corporate staffs and manufacturing engineering.

She has worked in compensation, benefits and labor relations and held key assignments in Europe, Asia and North America.

"Melissa's global experience, relationships and knowledge of the business will serve her well in leading GM Human Resources," said GM Chairman and Chief Executive Officer Dan Akerson. "Her no-nonsense counsel and proven track record as a business partner and change agent will benefit the total GM team."

Howell, 46, will report to Akerson and serve on the company's Executive Operations Committee.

She succeeds Cindy Brinkley, who decided to leave GM to pursue other opportunities.

Howell joined GM in 1990 as a Labor Relations representative at the Willow Run Assembly Plant in Michigan.

She is an active volunteer in the Big Brothers Big Sisters program in Detroit, a member of the Board of Trustees for the Judson Center in Royal Oak, and serves on the program committee for Inforum Michigan.

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