



## Auto program progresses at Franklin County Career and Technology Center

By KEITH PARADISE Staff writer

Students in the Franklin County Career and Technology Center automotive program have typically been prepared for careers as mechanics, auto body technicians and older vehicle restoration.

They can now add "insurance adjuster" to their skill set.

For the past two years, students at the Career Center have been learning the computer programs that insurance company adjusters use when appraising damage on a vehicle that's been in accident. The computer system gives students the chance to learn the process involved when a vehicle's been damaged.

It also gives them a chance to learn a system that will pretty much be standard, should they enter the world of auto body repair, with few body shops offering written appraisals anymore.

"The days of hand-writing an appraisal are pretty much over unless you're a small shop and don't get much work," instructor Pat Parson said, adding that he still has students do a couple of hand-written estimate assignments, so they can

get a feel for what goes into collision work.

Not only are the computer systems closer to what students will face when they graduate from the school, they're also less time consuming.

In the days of hand-written estimates, the adjuster would sometimes have to spend time looking up the individual parts for specific cars. With the computer system, the student enters the vehicle's identification number and all of the available options for that particular model pop up.

The adjuster then picks the parts they need and then totals the cost. Parson said the only item that the computer programs don't take into account is the amount of time it will take to repair a vehicle.

Currently the department has one notebook computer with the system on it, but Parson said he intends to obtain about five more computers so more students can be learning the programs at a given time.

"We're just trying to keep up out here with what is going on in the real world," Parson said.

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Keith Paradise can be reached at [kparadise@publicopinionnews.com](mailto:kparadise@publicopinionnews.com) or 262-4811.

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