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HANDS-ON WITH HISTORY
AUTOMOTIVE FOUNDATIONS WORKSHOP FOR YOUTH
FORD PIQUETTE PLANT MUSEUM
Scholarships Available

For Immediate Release:

DETROIT, (June 17, 2025) – This summer, students can learn about automotive engineering in the very place that launched Detroit’s reputation as the Motor City.

The Ford Piquette Plant Museum, the birthplace of the Model T, in collaboration with Meknology, Inc. and Lawrence Technological University (LTU), will offer a workshop introducing students to automotive engineering through a historical and hands-on lens. “Automotive Foundations” will take place at the museum on two consecutive Saturdays, July 26 and August 2, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. This class is designed for youth ages 14 to 21 with an interest in developing mechanical knowledge and skills. The cost is \$100, but full scholarships are available based on need.

Led by mechatronics and mechanical engineer, Daniel Hodges, founder of Meknology, this course will engage students in the design and function of the first Model T gasoline engines and early electric vehicles of the early 1900s. Through interactive lessons and guided builds, they will construct both a basic gasoline engine and a simple electric motor. While the primary focus is on early technologies, students will also explore how modern internal combustion and electric systems have evolved. Emphasis will be placed on innovation, historical impact, and sustainability.

As the museum’s first Engineer-in-Residence, Hodges will empower youth through experiential learning that includes looking under the hoods of historic vehicles to understand their basic operation and historical significance. Students will compare and contrast early engines in terms of mechanical simplicity, functionality and limitations. Students will also learn about Intellectual Property patents and teamwork in engineering. The workshop will conclude with Model T driving demonstrations and rides for the students.

Hodges is a seasoned mechatronics and mechanical design engineer with over two decades of diverse industry experience spanning automotive, refrigeration, energy systems, and advanced product development. Hodges combines technical depth with a passion for mentorship and innovation. Meknology is located in Newlab, a hub for technology start-ups adjacent to Michigan Central Station, and designs patented sustainable systems to transform waste byproducts into valuable, marketable resources.

Enrollment for this one-of-a-kind automotive experience is limited and first-come, first serve. Students must be present for both sessions. Families or students can request a scholarship by emailing info@piquetteplant.org. A box lunch and snacks will be provided each Saturday.

The Ford Piquette Plant Museum is a U.S. National Historic Landmark and one of the oldest surviving automotive plants in the world. With over 65 rare vehicles, exhibits and photographs, the museum is open year-round to the public, Wednesdays through Sundays, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Admission tickets are \$10-\$20. Optional guided tours take place daily at 10 a.m., 12 p.m. and 2 p.m. Private group tours and school field trips are available on all days by appointment. The museum is also a popular destination for weddings and corporate events of all sizes.

For more information about the Ford Piquette Plant Museum visit www.fordpiquetteplant.org or call (313) 872-8759.