

Christian Larios used to see working on cars as merely a hobby, but now he sees it as an essential part of his education and his future success.

Larios is serving as an intern at Monument Chevrolet as part of Pasadena ISD's Automotive Youth Education Systems program. The program is designed to prepare students for careers in

program, the National Automotive Technicians Education Foundation (NATEF) must certify a program. This certification is based on the type and quality of the equipment, the adequacy of the facilities, the technical competency of the instructors, and all other industry standards.

The Skill Center became AYES certified

Students have the opportunity to serve as interns at dealerships during the summer between their junior and senior years in high school. The students collaborate with master technicians who train them to meet dealership requirements. Monument Chevrolet is one dealership working closely with the school district.

"This is just like a real world job for the

ing as interns at dealerships in the surrounding area this summer.

"I've seen the students mature a lot from the time they start with us here. I've really seen them grow, and I think this is a great program for them," said assistant service manager Danny Barnett.

Larios will be a senior at Pasadena High in the fall. He is one of two students that

TUNING UP A CAREER PATH

Dealerships let students check under the hood as interns in automotive education program



Pasadena High School student Christian Larios, an intern at Monument Chevrolet this summer, looks over repairs to an engine with his mentor Kevin Smith. Monument is one of the major participants in the Automotive Youth Education Systems program.

retail automotive service. This year, partnerships were formed among participating automotive manufacturers, dealers and selected high schools.

The L.P. Card Skill Center, directed by Mickey Ohlendorf, offers nine courses in auto technology, eight that cannot be taken anywhere else in the district. An auto body course is offered at Dobie High School and Pasadena High as well as the Skill Center.

In order to become a part of the AYES

in January 2000, with Dobie and Pasadena being later certified in September 2003. With their NATEF and AYES certifications, these high schools are able to fully prepare students in every course based on industry requirements.

"We have excellent equipment, facilities and certified teachers and it all comes free to our students. This is an excellent opportunity for students who choose this career path," said Ohlendorf.

students. They come here and physically do everything a normal technician would do," said Monument service manager Eddie Cox.

In the intern program, students work through the summer and continue to train with the dealership through their senior year. Working with the dealership while finishing their last year of high school has a large impact on the students. There are a total of 13 Pasadena ISD students serv-

were selected as interns this summer from Pasadena. "I like the program. I get to work on cars all summer and learn new things," Larios said.

Larios' mentor Kevin Smith has been an employee at Monument Chevrolet for one year. "AYES is good for students interested in auto technology and that want to work in this field. They won't be blind entering a job and will have a sense of the skills they need," said Smith. ●

Lyondell-Citgo donates \$5,000 for upgrades

Lyondell-Citgo Refining, LP recently donated \$5,000 to the Pasadena ISD Printing Department to upgrade equipment for the district's graphics department.

Former Lyondell-Citgo Community Relations Manager Denise Finck-Converse presented the check to the district.

The generous donation will be used to support the efforts of teachers and staff throughout the district. ●



EHCMA Scholarship Donation

The East Harris County Manufacturers Association's (EHCMA) education subcommittee recently donated more than \$400 to the Pasadena High School scholarship fund. EHCMA members raised the funds by selling tickets to a Houston Aeros hockey game earlier this year. In turn, the Aeros gave back a portion of each ticket sold to go toward the scholarship fund. Presenting the check to PHS senior counselor Debbie Rodriguez, center, are EHCMA education subcommittee member Rose Broome of Agrifos and committee chairman Robert Barrow of OxyVinyls.