



ICAIA NEWS



Illinois College Automotive Instructor's Association

www.icaia.org

1976 FOUNDING FATHERS

- James Lausted (passed in 2009)
Prairie State College
- Paul Rickert (passed in 2017)
Waubensee Community College
- Ray Oviyach (passed in 2018)
Triton College

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Our Partners

The Spring 2026 ICAIA Conference is being hosted by Southern Illinois University in Murphysboro, IL on March 26 and 27.

We encourage all members to attend the Thursday morning vendor tradeshow, where several new partners will be joining us. Our vendor partners play a vital role in supporting our classrooms and labs by providing updated technology, tools, equipment, and industry insight. Their contributions, through vendor fees and generous door prizes, also help fund the ICAIA student scholarships.

In addition, some door prizes are awarded specifically to instructors who visit vendor booths, so be sure to stop by each one.

Please also take a moment to invite fellow technical educators who could benefit from what ICAIA provides. New instructors, experienced teachers, those teaching new subject areas, and those teaching in other states are all welcome to ICAIA.

All attendees benefit from our bi-annual conferences, which offer opportunities to learn and share best practices, gain hands-on training, and stay current with new technologies and trends.

We look forward to seeing everyone in a few weeks at Southern Illinois University!

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Treasury Report

The Association continues to be financially sound. Currently, the ICAIA Treasury is at \$ \$55,852.53 with expenses for the upcoming conference yet to be paid.

When you pay your membership dues, you will receive an e-mail from me (Art Koudelka - ICAIA Executive Treasurer) with your membership length (1, 3, or 5 years). ICAIA Membership follows the school year, and dues are paid in the Fall. Therefore, this year's ICAIA dues pay for the 2025-2026 school year.

Art Koudelka
ICAIA Executive Treasurer
Illinois Valley Community College

Conference Registration

We encourage everyone to use the online registration for the conference. For conference planning and management purposes, we do not accept walk-in (day-of) registration.

PD Credits & ASE Education Foundation Training Hours

The ICAIA will offer up to 10 ISBE PD hours for Illinois high school instructors that participate in the 2-day conference.

The ICAIA conference also allows instructors who attend the full 2-day conference up to 10 ASE Education Foundation hours. Certificates will be mailed participants after the conference.

Database Report

When paying your ICAIA Dues, please sign up for 3 or 5 years. It saves a lot of work behind the scenes and helps prevent members from missing mailings and communications.

If you have any changes for the database, or if you want to know your dues status, I can be reached at selza@d211.org or cell phone 630-605-6771.

Steve Elza
William Fremd High School

Spring 2026 ICAIA Conference

March 26 and 27, 2026



Southern Illinois University

CARBONDALE

The Spring 2026 ICAIA Conference is being hosted by Southern Illinois University

NOTE: The conference is being held in the SIU Transportation Education Center which is separate from the main campus. It is located at: 545 North Airport Road, Murphysboro, IL 62966. Follow the ICAIA signs when entering the airport for parking and conference entrance.

Contact: Drew Croxell, email: dcroxell@siu.edu



Host Hotel

Holiday Inn Express & Suites: Murphysboro-Carbondale

Host Hotel is Full

Backup Hotel (rooms still available)

Home 2 Suites by Hilton

200 W. Elm Road

Carbondale, IL 62901

Other Hotels

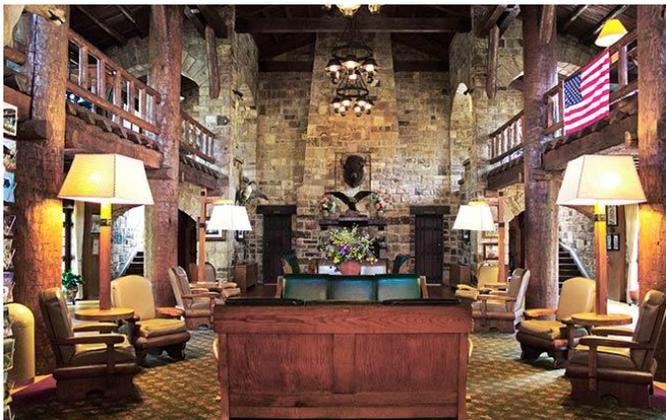
Hampton Inn – Carbondale

Holiday Inn and Suites – Carbondale

Thursday Evening Banquet

Giant City Lodge, 460 Giant City Lodge Road

Makanda, IL 62958, Phone: 618-457-4921



Online Registration

ICAIA members can register for conferences and pay membership dues online!

ICAIA recommends using the online portal as a quick and easy way to register for the conference and pay any membership dues. Just follow the link located on the main ICAIA website www.icaia.org. The online registration service is provided by Brushfire and delivers a simple and easy to use process for members and vendors to complete the registration process. Utilizing the online registration portal provides:

- Increased convenience (available 24/7)
- Increased speed (No forms to fill out)
- Improved tracking (Helps the host school and Association plan for numbers)

Industry partners interested in participating in the Thursday morning Trade Show can also register via the online portal.

There is a small fee associated with utilizing the online registration portal, but online registration does deliver great value to the member, vendor, host school, and the Association.

Prior Registration Required

ICAIA reminds everyone that for conference planning and management purposes, we do not accept walk-in (day-of) registration.

ISBE Professional Development Credits for Illinois High School Instructors

ICAIA will be offering **10 ISBE PD Credits** for Illinois High School Instructors attending both days of the ICAIA conference. These credits will be issued through Illinois Valley Community College (IVCC) which has graciously agreed to provide these PD Credits again.

Illinois high school instructors that need **ISBE PD Credits** should pick up an **ISBE Evaluation form** at the conference registration table on Thursday morning. The form will need to be complete and returned to Art Koudelka (ICAIA Executive Treasurer) before leaving on Friday, by 12:15 pm. There will be a drop box at the registration table on Friday morning for your convenience.

If your evaluation form is not returned by Friday 12:15 pm, you will **not** receive ISBE PD Credits for the conference.

IVCC will email you your ISBE PD credits within a few weeks (after the conference) for the ICAIA High School Instructors that turned in their ISBE Evaluation form on time.

ICAIA Conference Agenda and Training Hours

Instructors who attend both Thursday and Friday, as well as the banquet to receive 10 PD Credits (high School Instructors) and 10 hours that can be applied toward the ASE Education Foundation hours. Fully attending both Fall and Spring ICAIA Conferences will provide instructors with 20 hours of update training.

Thursday

6:30 – 8:00 a.m.	Trade Show Set-Up
8:00 – 1:00	Trade Show
8:00 – 10:00	Continental Breakfast
8:00 – 10:00	Pickup of Conference Materials
10:00 – 11:45	Technical Session #1
11:45 – 1:00	Lunch / Business Meeting / Door Prizes
1:00 – 2:45	Technical Session #2
2:45 – 3:00	Break
3:00 – 4:45	Technical Session #3
4:45 – 6:00	Free Time & Travel
6:00 – 6:30	Social
6:30 – 7:30	Dinner Banquet
7:30 – 8:00	Keynote Speaker & Presentations

Friday

8:00 – 8:30 a.m.	Continental Breakfast
8:30 – 10:15	Technical Session #4
10:15 – 10:30	Morning Break
10:30 – 12:00	Technical Session #5

Upcoming Future Conferences

Spring 2026	Southern Illinois University March 26 and 27
Fall 2026	Waubonsee Community College October 15 th and 16 th
Spring 2027	Kankakee Community College March 2027 – Dates TBD
Fall 2027	Joliet Junior College October 2027 – Dates TBD
Spring 2028	We need a host!

The Start of the ICAIA

The early to mid-1970s marked a turning point in the United States. The nation was facing its first major oil crisis, and public awareness of environmental pollution was rapidly growing. In response, automotive manufacturers began making significant technological changes to their vehicles.

In 1975, the Illinois EPA invited college automotive instructors to a meeting at a hotel near Midway Airport in Chicago. The purpose was to explain how both current and future automotive technicians would need to adapt to the industry's changing demands. Among those attending were Jim Lausted of Prairie State College, Paul Rickert of Waubensee Community College, and Ray Oviyach of Triton College. All three were energized by the technological shifts underway and began to consider what instructors would need to do to keep pace.

About a month later, the three met again at a new-products meeting hosted by Fred Pierson, the manager at the Chicago Chrysler Training Center. During a coffee break, they discussed the importance of automotive instructors meeting regularly to stay informed and prepared.

Shortly afterward, Jim arranged a meeting with Paul and Ray at Prairie State College to explore forming an organization dedicated to this purpose. They agreed that instructors needed direct access to training from automotive manufacturers and aftermarket companies, training specifically designed for those teaching automotive technology. Word spread quickly, and in the spring of 1976, the first official conference was held, hosted by Paul Rickert. The Chicago Chrysler Training Center hosted the second conference that fall. Jim Lausted hosted the third in spring 1977, and Ray Oviyach hosted the fourth in fall 1977. The momentum was unmistakable.

By this time, the Association had established a strong ICAIA Board. Officers advanced through the ranks and then moved into advisory roles, ensuring continuity of knowledge and experience. This structure helped keep the Association member-driven and open to new ideas that would increase its value to instructors.

The role of an Executive Treasurer was determined to be pivotal in ensuring the consistency and integrity of the Association's administrative functions. Marty Zvonar from Parkland College participated in the early conferences and was appointed as the first Executive Treasurer. He served diligently until his retirement in the fall of 2000. His tenure laid a strong foundation for the Association's financial oversight and administrative stability.

With Marty's retirement, Art Koudelka from Illinois Valley Community College took over the responsibilities of the role. Art has continued to serve as Executive Treasurer, demonstrating ongoing dedication to the Association's governance and operational excellence. His leadership has been vital in ensuring the stability and effective management of the Association's financial affairs, contributing to the organization's sustained success and integrity over the years.

Over the years, many additional members have stepped up to support ICAIA by taking on leadership roles, managing databases, serving as body shop consultants, editing newsletters, and hosting conferences, all with the shared goal of supporting their peers and the industry.

Founding Fathers Scholarship

To recognize the extraordinary vision and dedication of Jim Lausted, Paul Rickert, and Ray Oviyach, the Association later established the **Founding Fathers Scholarship**. This scholarship stands as a lasting tribute to the three educators whose leadership, collaboration, and commitment to professional growth laid the foundation for ICAIA. Through this scholarship, their legacy continues—supporting future generations of automotive technology students and reinforcing the spirit of giving back that defined the organization's earliest days.



Left: Ray Oviyach, Middle: Jim Lausted, Right: Paul Rickert



Jim Krudl Rising Star Scholarship

Jim Krudl devoted 30 years to teaching Automotive Technology at the Technology Center of DuPage, formerly DAVEA, before retiring in 2005. Throughout his career, he became known as an uplifting presence to everyone who crossed his path. Colleagues, students, visiting instructors, and industry partners all remember him as someone who radiated joy, welcomed conversation, and made people feel valued. His dedication to his students helped build one of the strongest ASE/NATEF-certified automotive programs in the state of Illinois.

Jim's influence extended well beyond his own classroom. Within ICAIA, he was a generous mentor who freely shared his wisdom, experiences, and practical insights with younger instructors. He believed deeply in helping others grow, and many teachers credit Jim's guidance for shaping their careers. As a proud graduate of Southern Illinois University, his love for SIU's automotive program was unmistakable. He championed the program at every opportunity and encouraged countless students to pursue their education there.



What truly set Jim apart was the way he connected with people. To his students, he was far more than a teacher. He became a mentor, a role model, a steady father figure, and often a lifelong friend. Jim inspired his students to enter the automotive profession with confidence, and many went on to excel in their careers. Others followed directly in his footsteps, becoming automotive instructors themselves—and many of those new teachers joined ICAIA, continuing the cycle of mentorship Jim helped create.

Graduates who returned to visit often share the same heartfelt message: "If it wasn't for Jim Krudl, I wouldn't be where I am today." That sentiment captures the essence of his legacy. Jim was a remarkable person, a phenomenal teacher, and someone whose impact reached far and wide.

In his passing, the Association, together with his beloved wife Sharon, committed to carrying his legacy forward through the establishment of the Jim Krudl Rising Star Scholarship, ensuring that his spirit of mentorship and encouragement continues to lift future generations.



Thank You to Illinois Central College!

Thank you to the faculty, staff, students, and administration at Illinois Central College for hosting the Fall 2025 ICAIA Conference. It showcased numerous tradeshow vendors and engaging presenters that shared the latest technology, information, and training trends with ICAIA members!

During the Thursday evening banquet, three Illinois Central College automotive students were presented scholarships for their hard work both in and out of the classroom:

- Tyler Guyman: ICAIA Founding Fathers Scholarship
- Archer Bush: Jim Krudl Rising Star Scholarship

ICAIA thanks the many sponsors, vendors, presenters, and everyone at Illinois Central College for hosting a great conference!



Looking forward to seeing you at the next ICAIA Conference!





