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NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

Mazda Toyota Manufacturing Announces New Education Partnership with Local Schools

MTM's LIGHT Program provides industry professional to school partners in Morgan County and Huntsville City to support student career development

Madison, Alabama (August 19, 2025) — **Mazda Toyota Manufacturing** (MTM), alongside partners at Morgan County Schools Technology Park and Huntsville City Schools Center for Technology, announced the launch of its "Leading Industry Growth by Helping Teachers" (LIGHT) Program.

"We heard from our education partners that one of the biggest challenges in delivering consistent, quality career tech education, was attracting instructors with industry experience," said MTM Senior Vice President, David Fernandes. "MTM saw the opportunity to make a long-term investment in our schools and our future workforce by providing that kind of instructional support."

The LIGHT Program will provide an instructor's aide whose role will focus on classroom support through sharing industry knowledge and technical skills to both teachers and students in their partner schools. MTM Group Leader Courtney Franklin will serve in this role as of August 2025 and rotate between the two school districts. Initially, this partnership will launch in Morgan County Schools at Brewer High School and MCS Technology Park, and at Huntsville City Schools in the new Center for Technology.

"We are excited to partner with Mazda Toyota Manufacturing through the LIGHT Program, which will bring real-world industry expertise directly into our classrooms," offered Tracie Turrentine, Superintendent of Morgan County Schools. "It's an incredible opportunity to bridge education and industry for the benefit of our students and community."

Since 2018, the automotive joint venture has prioritized educational outreach; MTM's parent companies Mazda and Toyota celebrated their groundbreaking with a $750,000 gift earmarked for STEM education and workforce development in North Alabama. The MTM Grant Fund, which began grantmaking in 2022, has provided close to $1 million in funding to local programs that include school districts, STEM education, and workforce programming. The LIGHT Program furthers MTM's mission to increase tangible industry support to educators and students – support that has previously reached over 20,000 students and almost a dozen school districts through MTM's partnerships and giving.

"The LIGHT Program is an innovative approach to education that connects today's workforce with students and instructors," said Zac McWhorter, Career Technical Director at Huntsville City Schools. "By providing an experienced employee, this program enables us to improve workplace simulation, giving our students excellent exposure to potential job opportunities."

Franklin will support Huntsville City and Morgan County schools for up to three school years; eventually, other school partners will have the opportunity to participate. MTM's long-term strategy for the LIGHT

Program is to reach as many school districts as possible through rotating Franklin's role to new schools – and welcoming additional support as the program grows.

"Ultimately, we would love to see other industry partners and companies join us," offered Fernandes. "To see this kind of innovative, collaborative program benefitting more students and building more pipelines to industry is what this is all about for MTM."

For more information about MTM, visit www.MazdaToyota.com. For more information on the LIGHT Program, please reach out to media@mazdatoyota.com.

About Mazda Toyota Manufacturing

Mazda Toyota Manufacturing is a jointly owned-and-operated automotive production plant. The $2.3 billion facility has created over 4,500 jobs and assembles the Toyota Corolla Cross and Corolla Cross HEV, as well as the Mazda CX-50 and CX-50 HEV.

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