

Mississippi State University



X-cited!

Team Travels to California, Gains Insight, Visits Leno

Special points of interest:

- Team visits Jay Leno's Garage on trip to CA
- Team travels to display vehicle at Chevrolet dealership
- Upcoming Events for Challenge X
- Spotlight: Jenna Grantham

Members of Mississippi State's Challenge X team are back at the university after completing a road trip to California to help promote fuel-efficient vehicles with reduced environmental impacts.

After winning the national Challenge X competition earlier this year, five members of the team joined with counterparts from 16 other universities to promote more environmentally friendly vehicles.

In addition to taking first in the overall competition and tops in 10 individual categories, MSU's entry boasts a fuel efficiency of about 32 miles per gallon, and close to sports car level acceleration.

While in the Golden State, Matt Young of Meridian and other team members shared with numerous car enthusiasts various details of the 2005 Chevrolet Equinox crossover sports utility vehicle they re-engineered to win the three-year competition.

Young, a graduate student in electrical engineering, said the MSU group spent a few hours with late-night television show host Jay Leno, a well-known motorcycle and car

collector and proponent of bio-diesel.

"He asked us what we did different compared to others," Young said. "We also discussed how to make this vehicle technology more mainstream."



Team Member Stephen Phillips speaks with Jay Leno about MSU's vehicle design

MSU Challenge X Team Displays at Dealership



Team members and dealership representatives pose with the Challenge X vehicle

Team members traveled to Lucedale, MS, in March to display the Challenge X Equinox at a Mississippi State University Alumni Association event celebrating the University's 130th birthday.

While in town, members of the team stopped at a local Chevrolet dealership. Members of the community had a chance to get a close-up look at the design of the vehicle, as well as hear presentations from the team members themselves.

"We want to show that a vehicle that runs on biodiesel is being created right here in Mississippi," said Amanda McAlpin, the leader of the team's Outreach and Marketing group.

"We are trying to create a vehicle that will lessen the country's dependence on foreign fuel."

"We were excited to have the Challenge X team visit us," said Tom Wilder, promotions director for the dealership.

"We are always interested in learning about the newest vehicle technologies so that we can bring them to our customers."

Upcoming Events

- March 26—Vehicle Inspection
- March 27—Visit from General Motors mentor, Bill Beggs
- March 27—Vehicle will be displayed from 3:00-5:00pm at the science fair at the Humphrey Coliseum
- March 28—Visit from fourth-grade journalists

Atta-Dawgs

- Thanks to all who have volunteered recently for outreach events. Your participation is greatly appreciated!

Make sure you check out Mississippi State's Challenge X Website!



www.msuchallengex.org

Students in the Spotlight

This column gives you a behind-the-scenes look at the students who are working on the Challenge X competition at MSU.

The MSU Challenge X team is constantly evolving. Since the last competition, a number of our team members graduated and moved on to successful jobs, and we welcomed many new members to the team. Among them is sophomore Mechanical Engineering major, Jenna Grantham. Jenna comes to us from Brandon, MS, and is thrilled to be a member of the team.

Here, Jenna answers a few of our questions about the competition and about her experiences so far.

Outside of Challenge X and your studies, what are some of your hobbies or interests?

I enjoy singing, sewing and dancing. I also like dragonflies, the color green, painting, pottery, and rain with the sun shining.

That sounds like fun. What do you feel like you are getting out of being a part



Jenna Grantham

What do you think will be the most memorable part of Challenge X for you?

I believe the competition will be the most memorable.

What is the most difficult part of Challenge X?

I have found that coming in on the competition on the fourth/final year trying to

learn all the things about the car that have already been done and need to be done was difficult.

What do you most enjoy about being part of the MSU team?

I love the interaction with the other members who have more knowledge, and I enjoy learning all the different aspects of the car.

What do you hope to get out of the experience?

I am hoping that I will leave with a better knowledge of hybrids and the automobile industry. I also hope Challenge X gives me the experience I need to get a great job in the industry.

What do you plan to do after you get your degree?

I am hoping to get a job designing vehicles for a major car corporation.

For newsletter suggestions or corrections, please contact Liza Sisson at lsisson@cavs.msstate.edu.