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Scholarships given out **Cleveland, OH -** This year, the Greater Cleveland Automobile Dealers' Association (GCADA) is doubling down once again on its education efforts.

Through its Auto Dealers Educational Assistance Foundation (ADEAF), the GCADA has awarded 50 scholarships to dealer employees or their dependents in more than 250 dealerships spread across the 21 counties in Northern Ohio served by the Association. The number is double the number of scholarships awarded last year.

"For the second year in a row, our board felt it was appropriate to increase the number of scholarships we awarded this year," says Louis A. Vitantonio, president of the GCADA. "These scholarships allow us to show the value we put on higher education. It's also an excellent way of giving back to both our dealers and their families."

Last year, the GCADA increased the number of scholarships from 20 to 25, and also increased the amount of each scholarship from $1,000 to $2,500. This year, the GCADA awarded 50 scholarships, each worth $2,500.

"The Association has been very successful this year," said Dan Sanders, president of Progressive Chevrolet and Progressive Chrysler Jeep Dodge in Massillon and chairman of the GCADA. "We felt the best way to use these funds was to give back to the dealers who support our Association by helping employees and their families. The employees are the ones who make our dealerships successful."

The Ganley Automotive Group, which has multiple dealerships across Northern Ohio from

Painesville in the east to Akron in the south to North Olmsted in the west, had the most scholarship winners with eight.

“This is simply an awesome program offered by the GCADA,” says Ken Ganley of the Ganley Automotive Group. “Virtually every dealer in the Association is involved in some sort of charity endeavor simply as a matter of being a good corporate citizen. It feels great to see something come back to them.

“But all we really do is to promote the program to our employees and make sure they know it’s available. On behalf of our employees and our scholarship winners, I’d like to thank Lou [Vitantonio] and the entire staff of the GCADA.”

“Our employees are great people and rewarding them is what it is all about,” adds Bernie Moreno, president of the Collection Auto Group. “We’re honored first and foremost to have them as a part of our team, but it’s also great that the Association can help them with these scholarships.

“With the employment situation what it is today, education is more important than ever before.”

To qualify for the scholarship, applicants had to be a graduating senior or attending an accredited college or university, and show either need or merit. Applicants had to be a dependent of full-time dealership personnel or employed at a GCADA member dealership. In addition to showing need and merit, the applicants also had to demonstrate a strong ambition to succeed in college, in addition to two letters of recommendation and their high school or college transcripts.