



Press Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Florida Autobody Collision Alliance Newest SCRS Affiliate

New state alliance committed to uniting local associations throughout Florida.

Prosser, WA, November 20, 2008 — With greater frequency collision repair professionals and the regional associations to which they belong are calling for a unified approach to problem-solving. It is this kind of cooperative mindset and collaborative philosophy that has shaped the Florida Autobody Collision Alliance (FACA), a new statewide association that is the most recent Society of Collision Repair Specialists (SCRS) affiliate association.



FLORIDA AUTOBODY COLLISION ALLIANCE

There have always been successful regional associations in Florida, but until recently no widescale attempt had been made to coordinate their efforts or facilitate communication between them. That began to change in the latter part of 2005.

“As an industry, we found ourselves fragmented across the state,” explains Dave Hesser, co-director of FACA’s Tampa Bay Chapter, who was involved in the earliest stages of FACA. “It frustrated those of us that realized working together could make us more effective at improving training, lobbying at the state capital on the behalf of the consumer and our businesses, and other goals. By being divided, we were working against our own best interests.”

Dave McBroom, President of FACA continues: “There was a lot of existing apathy and distrust among shop owners. In an effort to counteract this trend, a handful of industry professionals from different groups and associations began to meet informally in the Jacksonville area. On a regular basis we exchanged ideas and discussed industry issues and it was very constructive. Word spread and interest grew. We eventually began to field inquiries about participation from repairers outside the region.”

Meeting attendance—which in the beginning consisted of four committed individuals—soon numbered close to 70. With enthusiasm building, talk turned to the creation of a formal statewide network under which local associations could retain their autonomy. Members would leverage the advantages of a larger group without sacrificing regional focus. Seeking advice for how to go about doing this, the group turned to SCRS who suggested they create chapters in locations where association participation was already healthy.

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“The idea clicked with us because we saw it as a way to grow quickly in a short period of time,” adds Hesser. “Though we’re still in organizational mode, starting chapters in areas with an established industry presence has put us on the fast track to build for a solid future. The organizational skills and tireless drive of FACA Vice President George Mantzris played a large part in our progress, as well.”

Thanks to its strategy and the hard work of those involved, the FACA already boasts over 150 members in five chapters centered around the hubs of Jacksonville, Lakeland, Tampa, Orlando and Ft. Lauderdale. Resources are being set aside for the hiring of an executive director, planned for January 1, 2009.

Affiliation with SCRS is a logical step in the FACA’s evolution given the Society’s advisory role during its initial stages. However, the advantages of membership extend further. “We don’t want to operate in a vacuum regarding national issues, and we expect SCRS to provide broad and valuable perspective in that area,” says McBroom. “Additionally, we desire to cooperate with insurers without sacrificing the best interests of the consumer or our members. SCRS is sure to offer useful insight there.”

SCRS salutes the ongoing efforts of the FACA to strengthen the industry’s voice in Florida. “The Florida Autobody Collision Alliance has gone from a progressive vision of what could be to a functioning entity in an amazingly short time,” says SCRS Chairman Gary Wano. “Their dedication and commitment to the best interests of the industry is an inspiration and a welcome addition to SCRS. They live and breathe the concept that ‘Working Together is the Most Important Work We Do’.”

About FACA: The Florida Autobody Collision Alliance is committed to the future of the collision repair industry: to provide the leadership needed, raise the professional image of the industry and develop new leaders to carry forward. The association’s goal is to educate, inform and represent the collision repair professional in all aspects of the industry, including repairers, insurers and vendors. FACA members are required to be a Class A collision repair facility as defined by the standards of the Collision Industry Conference (CIC).

About SCRS: Through its direct members and 36 affiliate associations, SCRS is comprised of 6,000 collision repair businesses and 58,500 specialized professionals who work with consumers and insurance companies to repair collision-damaged vehicles. Additional information about SCRS including other news releases is available at the SCRS web site: www.scrs.com. You can e-mail SCRS at the following address: info@scrs.com.

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