

Alcove Center benefits from recycled auto program

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Alcove staff members Tobi Ellen Care, Mindy Shemtov and Kelly Catrambone, picked up a rehabilitated 2005 Chrysler Pacifica on April 5 from Admiral Auto Body Centers in Pleasantville. Admiral spearheaded a \$10,000 effort to make the totaled vehicle like new, and donate it to the Northfield nonprofit agency, with the help of many other local businesses.

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Admiral Auto Body Centers in Pleasantville recently rehabilitated a totaled 2005 Chrysler Pacifica SUV for the Alcove Center for Grieving Children and Families in Northfield, as part of the national Recycled Rides program.

Admiral had help from many other local businesses, said Admiral Auto Body's Operations Manager Christina Rivera, who coordinated the effort. It required \$10,000 in parts and another \$4,400 in donated labor, she said.

The nonprofit Alcove provides support services to children and teens after the death of a loved one. It provides the services at its Northfield location and at schools and other locations. Executive Director Mindy Shemtov said the donation came at the perfect time, as the vehicle the group's staff had used for years was old, raising concerns about its reliability.

"We have expanded our school outreach program to three counties, and we go into distressed neighborhoods," Shemtov said, so the agency really needs reliable transportation.

Admiral Auto Body's Operations Manager Christina Rivera first called Shemtov in September, asking if she knew of a family that needed a vehicle. Shemtov told her about the agency's problem with its old SUV, and Rivera agreed to donate a vehicle to the agency. The Alcove got the car on April 5.

"It looks brand new," Shemtov said.

Two weeks before The Alcove took delivery, its previous "Alcove mobile" stopped running for good, Shemtov said. It had been donated to the agency several years ago with 90,000 miles on it.

This is the second year Admiral has participated in the Recycled Rides program, a nationwide community service project supported by members of the National Auto Body Council. Members repair and donate recycled vehicles to give to families and service organizations in need.

Last year the Admiral program gave a rehabbed 2008 Nissan Sentra to Claire Schwarz of Atlantic City, who was chosen from more than 60 people who applied. She needed the car to help her get a job, and to transport sick family members to needed care, she said at the time.

Rivera said Admiral will rehabilitate and give away at least one more vehicle this year. She hand-picks the cars out of junkyards, choosing vehicles that have been hit in the rear, to minimize engine and other mechanical issues.

Admiral Auto Body, whose technicians donated their labor, had help from a variety of companies during the three-month project, said Rivera. Geico Insurance donated the car, Parts and materials were donated by local businesses Car Toyz, of Pleasantville; Till Paint Co., of Vineland; American Auto Salvage, of Mays Landing; Casino Car Care, of Ocean City; EL&M Auto Recycling, of Hammonton; Mays Landing Auto Parts and South Jersey Auto Supply, both of Mays Landing; and Auto Trim Design, a mobile service in Atlantic County. Out-of-area firms LKQ Corp/Keystone, of Pennsauken; Fred Beans Parts, of Doylestown, Pa.; and national company Akzo Nobel also helped, Rivera said.



Brad Pogachefsky (center), President of Admiral Nissan, and Manager Christina Rivera praised their crew for the hard work and long hours to make this gift possible.