

NU-LOOK COLLISION CENTERS

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BUSINESS

Strategy workshop to go international

RochesterWorks! will offer a workshop for businesses interested in taking their business international from 1 to 3 p.m. Thursday, March 18, at the United Way Building, 75 College Ave. It will be presented by Laurie DeRoller, executive director of the International Business Council of Greater Rochester. There is no charge and parking is free. Registration is required, as seating is limited; contact Diane Lewis at (585) 258-3545 or dlewis@rochesterworks.org.

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Women taking charge at area auto shops

By PHILIP ANSELMO

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CANANDAIGUA — The car-repair business has been a male-dominated field since the dawn of the automobile age, but that appears to be changing at a regional collision business.

Julie Fox started working for the Nu-Look Collision Center in Henrietta about a year ago and made the move to the company's Canandaigua shop last April, and, she said, she has every intention of sticking around.

"I heard from a friend who worked in estimating at a body shop that it's a well-paying job — and that motivated me to learn the estimating business," she said.

When Fox was younger, she had apprenticed in hairdressing, but after getting out of high school, she got a job working in the front end of a body shop.

"After being around the business a while, I started writing estimates," she said.

After about six years in the



PHILIP ANSELMO/MESSENGER POST

Julie Fox, an estimator at the Canandaigua Nu-Look Collision Center, is one of many women who have climbed the ranks at area automotive repair shops over the past few years.

business, working in Georgia, Fox took a break to raise her two daughters. Back in New York, she had to get state licensing to

keep doing the estimating work she learned down South.

"It's a good business," she said. "People are always driving cars and

always wrecking them — it's almost job security, however unfortunate," she said.

Meanwhile, the Nu-Look centers in Bergen, Gates and Irondequoit are also seeing more women take the top posts. Tammy Toor has taken the helm at the Bergen center, where she started out as a customer service representative in 1999. She learned the trade by watching what the estimators were doing — "from behind the scenes," she said — before she got the job herself five years later.

Since hiring their first female estimator in 1995, Nu-Look has seen an increase in female job applicants. The company suspects that the portrayal of women in upper-level positions in their television commercials has helped drive the interest.

"The social impact of the media is not to be underestimated," said Natalie Campbell, a marketing consultant. "The images one sees portrayed on television, both in advertising and on shows, influence us all greatly."