

## Kalitta Air receives FAA Diamond Award

by Jason Ogden

OSCODA – The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) recognized Kalitta Air of Oscoda on March 14 for excellence in maintenance employee training.

Company owner, Connie Kalitta, who started the company after a successful career as a drag racer, was on hand to accept the award from FAA Safety Program Manager Gary Knaggs.

Kalitta Air specializes in the transportation of freight worldwide. The Oscoda division is responsible for keeping the company's aircraft fleet flying.

"I'm very proud of what has been going on here in Oscoda," Kalitta told his employees, gathered at the Shoreline Theater.

The Diamond Award is the FAA's highest honor for maintenance training and is bestowed when more than 50 percent of a company's employees have received a minimum of six hours of safety and technical training.

According to Kalitta Maintenance Training Manager Angel Melendez, the company was well above the FAA threshold for the Diamond Award, with 68 percent of the Oscoda branch employees meeting or exceeding the standard.

He also said this was the first time that the company has earned the honor since it was founded by Kalitta.

In addition to the company award, individual employees were

given award certificates and lapel pins, which designated their degree of training for 2006.

Melendez said that 275 employees were recognized, with 72 presented the Bronze Award for six hours of training; 83 given the Silver Award for 12 hours of training; 75 earned the Gold Award for 26 hours of training; 30 received the Ruby Award for 60 hours of training, and 15 employees were the recipients of the Diamond Award for 100 hours of training.

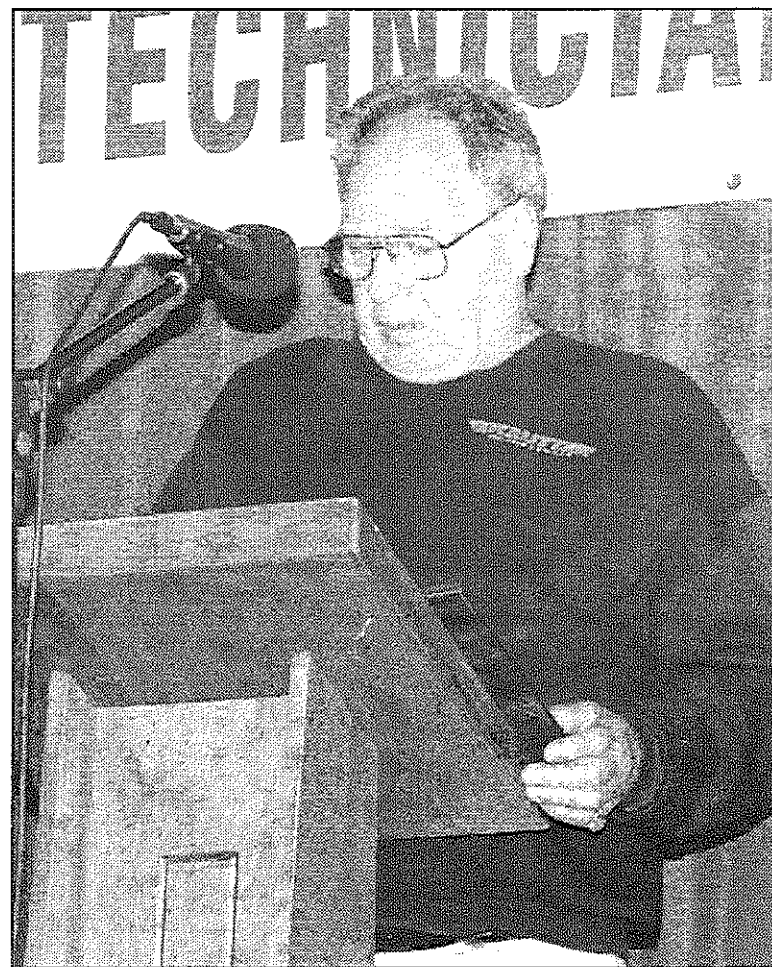
Melendez said the FAA program is a good way for the company to promote training for the maintenance personnel.

"It is going to produce a safer and more reliable aircraft," he said.

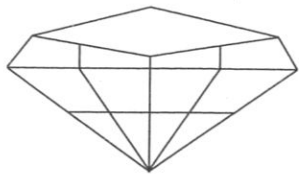
According to Knaggs, this award is seldom given to a Michigan company.

The FAA official commended the company for its progressive training program, which, he said, helps keep aviation safer.

"[The FAA] can't just come to your place and make you safer on your own," he told the Kalitta audience.



*Photo by Jason Ogden*  
**ACCEPTS AWARD** – Kalitta Air owner, Connie Kalitta, gives a short acceptance speech to FAA officials and employees after receiving the FAA Diamond Award.



U.S. Department  
of Transportation

**Federal Aviation  
Administration**

**Certificate of Excellence**  
**“Diamond Award”**  
*presented to*

*Kalitta Maintenance*

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*For Actively Participating in the FAA Aviation Technician  
Training Program.*

*Gary Knaggs, FAAS Team Pgrm. Mgr.*

*Representative of the Administrator*

*March 14, 2007*

*Date*