

## Benefiting local communities through the Mazda Specialist Bank

**Mazda's unique contribution to society, whereby employees put their specialist knowledge, abilities, and skills to use in local communities, has now been running for 15 years.**

"I'm amazed that you have constantly been able to offer us fresh, exciting insights over the past ten years." So wrote a teacher at a high school in a thank-you letter to Tsutomu Fukuma, who has a given presentations there every year.

Current and former employees of Mazda and its Group companies who possess specialist knowledge, abilities, and skills, are registered with the Mazda Specialist Bank and contribute to society by actively responding to requests from local communities. Through this program, Fukuma gives presentations at junior high and high schools once or twice a year.

His starting point for getting involved was a request from one of his former high school teachers. At that point (in 1999), unemployment was high and young people had little hope of joining a company or finding work. Fukuma was asked to "convey the message that there are people who don't give up, even when things get difficult." The theme of his presentation was "the importance of having a dream and persevering to the end." Since his childhood, Fukuma had been attracted to the idea of making things, and his commitment to



**Tsutomu Fukuma**  
Assistant Manager, Powertrain Technology Development Department

embark on design and manufacturing as early as possible led him to enter an industrial high school. From there he went on to university, and after joining Mazda he dedicated himself to the

development of the hydrogen engine at the Technical Research Center. He was suddenly transferred to the sales sector, and even though he had



never imagined himself doing that sort of work, he put his heart into it. When he returned to the Technical Research Center, his experience was put to good use. Fukuma tells the students his own life story and he uses a cutaway model of a rotary engine to convey the attraction of design and manufacturing.

During his presentations, Fukuma places importance on addressing his young audience at the same eye level, and talking in his own words without embellishment. With sweat glistening on his forehead while he speaks, he grabs the audience's attention with his words. Some junior high school students who were worried about their futures have since made up their minds about what they want to do after hearing Fukuma's presentations. There are schools that ask him back almost every year, and others that appreciate his talks so much they ask him to come and speak in non-classroom settings for a wider audience. Although he may meet these young people only once in their lifetimes, Fukuma does not merely give the same presentation each time, but always tries to add something about his own personal growth during that year. This was why the teacher's words in the thank-you letter he received struck a chord with him.

"Looking back at my own life in my presentations helps me grow further. I also think that responding to requests from people in the community, whatever form my response may take, also increases my motivation at work," says Fukuma. The Mazda Specialist Bank not only contributes to local communities, but also satisfies the hearts of the people who respond to such requests. By bringing people together, perhaps this program even helps spread a little happiness.