



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: 24 October 2011

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SPE[®] AUTOMOTIVE DIVISION ANNOUNCES FINALISTS IN 41ST AUTOMOTIVE INNOVATION AWARDS COMPETITION

TROY, (DETROIT) MICH. – The Automotive Division of the Society of Plastics Engineers (SPE[®]) today announced the finalists for its 41st-annual *Automotive Innovation Awards Competition*, the oldest and largest recognition event in the automotive and plastics industries. Finalists survived a pre-qualification round, as well as presentations before a panel of industry experts on September 29-30. Those selected from that round presented again before a Blue Ribbon panel of judges on October 10. Finalists were as follows.

CATEGORY: Body Exterior

• SPOILER WITH INTEGRATED ANTENNA & AMPLIFIER

- **OEM Make & Model:** General Motors Co. 2011 MY Chevrolet[®] Camaro[®] convertible sports car
- **Tier Supplier/Processor:** ABC Group – Exterior Systems
- **Material Supplier / Toolmaker:** Dow Automotive / ABC Group – Supreme Tooling
- **Material / Process:** Pulse[®] 2000 EZ PC/ABS / Blow molding
- **Description:** This is the first-ever integrated amplifier and antenna in a blow-molded spoiler. An innovative method was used to incorporate the antenna into and locate the amplifier in the spoiler. Not only were rear-vehicle aesthetics improved, but a 10% weight savings and 66% indirect cost savings were achieved.

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• **STRUCTURAL ASA AERO SPOILER**

- **OEM Make & Model:** Ford Motor Co. 2012 MY Ford® Edge® & Lincoln® MKT CUVs
- **Tier Supplier/Processor:** ABC Group / Delta Tool
- **Material Supplier / Toolmaker:** SABIC Innovative Plastics / Delta Tool
- **Material / Process:** Geloy® XP4034 ASA+PC / Gas-counter-pressure injection molding
- **Description:** A patented chemical foaming agent combined w/ASA in a non-traditional injection molding process was used to mold this aero spoiler, which reduces weight 1.5 lb / vehicle (for better fuel economy) and better meets customer requirements. The design allowed for parts integration while maintaining a Class A surface appearance and saving \$5.6MM USD direct costs and an estimated \$200,000 of indirect costs due to reduced complexity vs. the previous process.

• **RAM BOX ASSEMBLY WITH LID**

- **OEM Make & Model:** Chrysler Group LLC 2012 MY Dodge® Ram® pickup
- **Tier Supplier/Processor:** Penda Corp. / Penda Corp. (lid), Evco Plastics (bin), River Bend Industries (end caps)
- **Material Supplier / Toolmaker:** Asahi Kasei Plastics North America Inc. / Cavalier Tool & Mfg. Ltd. (injection-molded bin); Tooling Technology LLC (thermoformed lid)
- **Material / Process:** Thermylene® P8-40FG-4611 (box), P6-15FG-0741 (lid); P6-15FG-0754 (end caps) PP / Twin-sheet thermoforming
- **Description:** Twin-sheet thermoforming replaces blow molding to create the structure and ribbing of this tough storage box with lid. The result is a more uniform, more dimensionally accurate part whose length was increased from 5 ft 7 in. to 6 ft 4 in., requiring greater emphasis on the "heavy-duty" nature of the structure's design and materials of construction. A special new grade of GR-PP eliminated the need to upgrade to heavier and more costly PA 6/6, avoiding a 9% weight and 20% cost increase.

CATEGORY: Body Interior

• **SECOND-ROW VANITY MIRROR & DOME LAMP WITH DUAL LED**

- **OEM Make & Model:** Ford Motor Co. 2013 MY Lincoln® Town Car® livery
- **Tier Supplier/Processor:** Daimay NA Automotive, Inc. / Not Stated
- **Material Supplier / Toolmaker:** Not Stated / Not Stated
- **Material / Process:** PC/ABS / Not stated
- **Description:** This second-row vanity and dome lamp combo shares a single LED circuit board to serve both vanity and courtesy/reading light functions. Additional features include a light ramp-up intensity feature to provide a luxury feel for Lincoln customers. Molded-in-hooks and snaps on the back of the vanity bezel helped eliminate 4 J-clips, 4 high-retention clips, 4 screws and screw caps, plus labor during vehicle assembly. The resulting system saves 2.02 lb / vehicle vs. previous systems and saved \$4 USD/unit direct and \$8 USD/vehicle indirect costs vs. separately packaged units.

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• **SEAT-CONTROLS PLASTIC-MODULE BRACKET**

- **OEM Make & Model:** Ford Motor Co. 2012 MY Ford® Escape® SUV / Kuga® SUV
- **Tier Supplier/Processor:** Magna Seating LVSS / Genesis
- **Material Supplier / Toolmaker:** BASF Corp. / ETCS Inc.
- **Material / Process:** Ultramid® A3WG6 PA 6/6 30% GF / Injection molding
- **Description:** This plastic module bracket for seat controls replaced a steel stamping manufactured in progressive dies with an injection-molded 30% glass-reinforced PA 6/6 material. The approach saves 805 g of weight per vehicle vs. the previous design and only is required on 31% of seats whereas the previous design was used on 100% of seats, reducing the number of parts that must be managed, controlled, and installed and lowering the potential for failure modes. Further, it reduces parts from 2 to 1 and increases design frequency from 30 Hz to 61 Hz, eliminating potential NVH issues via a tripod mounting approach with honeycomb construction. It also eliminated \$260,000 USD in tooling costs and piece-costs were reduced \$0.15/set.

• **OVERMOLD-CUSHION SUSPENSION**

- **OEM Make & Model:** Ford Motor Co. 2012 MY Ford® Escape® SUV & Kuga® SUV
- **Tier Supplier/Processor:** Flex-O-Lators Div. of Leggett & Platt Inc.
- **Material Supplier / Toolmaker:** Washington Penn / Advanced Mold Engineering Inc.
- **Material / Process:** PPC5UF0 PP / Injection molding
- **Description:** The injection-molded PP design reduces part count from 6 to 1 / seat, piece cost \$0.56 USD per seat, tooling costs \$288,000 USD, and per-vehicle mass by 1.93 kg vs. the previous design. The single-piece design provides wire harness routing and retention, seat-cushion and back-trim retention, and climate-control system retention – functionality that previously required 6 parts to achieve. Now there are 5 fewer parts to manage, control, and install and fewer opportunities for potential failure modes.

CATEGORY: Chassis / Hardware

• **PLASTIC RATCHETING-STUD INSERT**

- **OEM Make & Model:** General Motors Co. 2012 MY Chevrolet® Camaro® sports car
- **Tier Supplier/Processor:** ITW Super Products / ITW Shanghai
- **Material Supplier / Toolmaker:** Mitsubishi Engineering Plastics / Donglei Shanghai
- **Material / Process:** Lupital® F20-03 POM / Injection molding
- **Description:** This all-plastic, self-centering ratcheting insert replaces metal nuts and allows for a much quicker load / hold (vs. traditional nut / bolt). The POM insert also acts as an isolator to protect the assembly from corrosion, paint chipping, and noise while achieving over 100 lb in pull-force retention. Weight is also reduced 50% and assembly time and warranty costs are reduced.

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• **OUTER BELT WEATHERSTRIP HIDDEN FASTENER RETENTION**

- **OEM Make & Model:** Ford Motor Co. 2011 MY Ford® All Focus® compact cars (globally)
- **Tier Supplier/Processor:** Henniges Automotive / MANUFACTURAS MAHER II, S.L .
- **Material Supplier / Toolmaker:** BASF Corp. / Camoplast Inc.
- **Material / Process:** Ultramid® polyamide 6/6 / Injection molding
- **Description:** The outer belt weatherstrip eliminates a threaded steel fastener and utilizes a plastic clip retainer. This is industry's first injection-molded plastic output pinion, which ensures functionality for 6-way locating with just 1 clip. Tough PA 6/6 provides robustness for impact resistance and holding force even after heat aging and high-pressure car washing. The application led to a 70% weight reduction, direct cost savings of \$850,000 USD annually and an indirect savings of \$450,000 USD each year.

• **POWER-WINDOW MOTOR OUTPUT GEAR & SHAFT**

- **OEM Make & Model:** Ford Motor Co. 2011 MY Ford® All Focus® compact cars (globally)
- **Tier Supplier/Processor:** Brose Fahrzeugteile GmbH & Co. KG / Mitsuba Corp.
- **Material Supplier / Toolmaker:** DuPont Automotive / Camoplast Inc.
- **Material / Process:** Hytrel® TPC-ET polyester / Injection molding
- **Description:** This power-window motor changed from a steel output pinion to a new injection-molded polyester one for a quieter/lighter motor to meet customer targets while still complying with window velocities. It is industry's first plastic output pinion that ensures functionality. Additionally, the design allows for regulator plug-'n-play capability into the power drum for better motion control. Packaging of the involute onto the spline gear to the accommodating drum spline was critical to the customer. The application saved \$450,000 USD direct and \$250,000 indirect cost savings annually.

CATEGORY: Environmental

• **RECYCLED MATERIALS FROM GULF OF MEXICO OIL SPILL**

- **OEM Make & Model:** General Motors Co. 2011 MY Chevrolet® Volt® extended-range EV
- **Tier Supplier/Processor:** GDC Inc. / Not Stated
- **Material Supplier / Toolmaker:** Mobile Fluid Recovery, Inc. / Not Stated
- **Material / Process:** Enduraprene® 2395 PP/PE/SBR / Multiple
- **Description:** This project demonstrates how engineers came to aid the Gulf of Mexico coast community to improve the response efforts to the oil spill and to conserve resources. Air-baffle components were molded from 100%-recycled material comprised of 25% PP Gulf oil-boom absorbent (recycled previously from automotive waste), 25% Milford Proving Ground test tires, and 25% polymer packaging aids from other General Motors' facilities, plus 25% post consumer PE bottles.

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• **LOADFLOOR USING COCONUT FELT NAME**

- **OEM Make & Model:** Ford Motor Co. 2012 MY Ford® Focus® BEV
- **Tier Supplier/Processor:** Autoneum Holding AG / Aftech LL & Hobbs Bonded Fibers
Material Supplier / Toolmaker: Natural Composites, LLC / Not Stated
- **Material / Process:** PP / Not stated
- **Description:** This loadfloor uses coconut fiber agricultural waste for reinforcement of the polymer matrix. The coir fibers are carded and needle punched to create a mat and then calendared inline to achieve the desired thickness before being die-cut to shape and assembled with other components. This provides income to farmers and reuses a waste material that otherwise would have little market usefulness.

• **BIO-FOAM FOR INSTRUMENT PANEL**

- **OEM Make & Model:** Ford Motor Co. 2012 MY Ford® Focus® compact car
- **Tier Supplier/Processor:** Automotive Component Holdings LLC
- **Material Supplier / Toolmaker:** BASF Corp. / Not Stated
- **Material / Process:** Elastofoam® Balance 27730 & 27731 PUR foam / Foam in place
- **Description:** The use of bio-based components for the polyurethane foam in this application provides a partially sustainable alternative to conventional urethanes with 100% petroleum inputs. By reducing petroleum-based content, the carbon footprint of vehicles is reduced, thanks to the CO₂ sequestering plants do during their growth cycle. The bio-foam also provides softness for this foam-in-place application, which required no tooling changes and was cost neutral.

• **REDUCED-VOC HYDROGRAPHICS**

- **OEM Make & Model:** Chrysler Group LLC 2011 MY Chrysler® 300 luxury sedan
- **Tier Supplier/Processor:** CpK Interior Products / Dongguan Taica Hirosawa Technologies Co., Ltd. / Hirosawa Automotive Trim Co. Ltd.
- **Material Supplier / Toolmaker:** Taica Corp. / Not Stated
- **Material / Process:** PC/ABS / Injection-Molded Substrate & Hydrographics Coating
- **Description:** The supplier's proprietary E-Cubic process eliminates the need for top coating and reduces VOCs vs. conventional hydrographics, paint, and in-mold film use while providing unique decorating features, including dual gloss levels and 3D texturing.

• **RENEWABLY SOURCED PA FOR BIODIESEL FUEL LINES**

- **OEM Make & Model:** Fiat S.p.A. 2011 MY Fiat® Diesel engines, various models
- **Tier Supplier/Processor:** Hutchinson
- **Material Supplier / Toolmaker:** DuPont Automotive / Not Stated
- **Material / Process:** Zytel® RS 1610 PA 10/10 / Extrusion
- **Description:** This is the first automotive use of PA 10/10 and the first bio-based PA 10/10 application. It is used in a diesel fuel line replacing PA 12. The bio-based resin provides superior temperature and chemical resistance, as well as heat-aging performance in biodiesel fuel blends vs. PA 12. This specific composition also contains a minimum of 60% bio content by weight for a more sustainable solution.

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CATEGORY: Materials

• **VOLCANIC-FILLER PILLAR TRIM**

- **OEM Make & Model:** Hyundai-Kia Automotive Group 2011 MY Kia® Pride subcompact & Optima® mid-size sedan and Hyundai® Elantra® compact car
- **Tier Supplier/Processor:** Plakor Co. Ltd.
- **Material Supplier / Toolmaker:** Hyundai EP Co. Ltd. / Not Stated
- **Material / Process:** Supol® HL345CL PP / Injection molding
- **Description:** This lightweight, injection-molded PP pillar trim provides the texture and appearance of more costly fabric-wrapped trim through use of a unique filler combination consisting of volcanic rock, fiber pile, and glass spheres replacing talc-filled PP and fabric-wrapped PP. No special tooling was required but process control was important so as not to crush the glass spheres and to distribute the fiber pile evenly during compounding and molding. A 10% weight and a 50% direct cost savings was achieved. Other benefits gained from using the volcanic mineral are that it emits negative ions (to reduce pollutants) and far-infrared energy.

• **TRANSMISSION COMPONENTS IN FLUOROELASTOMERS**

- **OEM Make & Model:** General Motors Co. 2011 MY All GM Vehicles using 6L45, 6L50, 6L80, & 6L90 transmissions
- **Tier Supplier/Processor:** Robert Bosch LLC / Freudenberg-NOK
- **Material Supplier / Toolmaker:** Freudenberg-NOK / Freudenberg-NOK
- **Material / Process:** FluoroXprene® B FKM & ETFE / Injection molding
- **Description:** Replacing both injection molded PA and conventional rubber, a new multi-patented fluoropolymer offers the chemical resistance of FKM with the rapid processing of thermoplastics. It also provides excellent compression set over the range of application temperatures, good permeation and fluid resistance vs. traditional fluorinated TPVs and TPEs, while solving a warranty issue and preventing seal failure, which can lead to electrical shorts. The unique 2-phase morphology of the material allows the ratio to be manipulated to produce either TPV or TPE formulations. Zero-waste, single-cavity direct injection leads to no scrap.

• **EP BIO-BASED POLYESTER POLYMER**

- **OEM Make & Model:** Toyota Motor Co. 2011 MY Toyota® Prius® "A" Alpha station wagon
- **Tier Supplier/Processor:** Kojima Press Industry Co., Ltd. / Howa Plastics Co., Ltd.
- **Material Supplier / Toolmaker:** DuPont Automotive / Not Stated
- **Material / Process:** Sorona® EP 2045 PTT / Not stated
- **Description:** This is the first use of polytrimethylene terephthalate (PTT), an entirely new thermoplastic polyester that also happens to be bio-based. This high-temperature thermoplastic polyester delivers improved performance (vs. PBT and PET), including higher stiffness and strength, higher use temperature but lower melt temperature at a lower specific gravity. Despite the fact that it contains 45% glass, it provides excellent surface finish, allowing elimination of a paint operation and the VOC and costs associated with painting. In addition, its bio-based content provides for CO₂ reduction and a more sustainable solution.

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CATEGORY: Powertrain

• **PLASTIC TRANSMISSION ACCUMULATOR PISTON**

- **OEM Make & Model:** Chrysler Group LLC 2012 MY All Chrysler Vehicles with Automatic Transmissions
- **Tier Supplier/Processor:** Chrysler Group LLC / Freudenberg-NOK Sealing Technologies
- **Material Supplier / Toolmaker:** Chevron-Phillips Chemical Co. LLC / Freudenberg-NOK Sealing Technologies
- **Material / Process:** Ryton® R-Y-120 PPS / Injection molding
- **Description:** This molded plastic transmission accumulator piston was designed around the current application so that the bore, seal rings, and return springs did not have to be changed and it was a drop-in replacement. Maximum effort went into material choice (PPS) and model shape to achieve the appropriate toughness to handle time, temperature, pressure, and combined cycling to create a 200,000-mile capable piston. The resulting part is 29 g vs. typical 47 g for aluminum pistons. A direct thermoplastic injection technology was developed to produce the parts, resulting in zero material waste through the use of a single-cavity design. The process allowed for a 33% improvement in cycle times and reduces the total floor space required by 20% over previous multi-cavity processes. The change in philosophy also eliminated the need for material regrind / reclamation equipment and lowered total capital expenditures. The innovative approach used here has allowed for a modular business cell that is adaptable to large market-volume fluctuations.

• **NI-MH BATTERY PACKAGE FOR HEV**

- **OEM Make & Model:** Volkswagen AG 2010 MY Volkswagen® Touareg® hybrid CUV
- **Tier Supplier/Processor:** Sanyo Electric / Not Stated
- **Material Supplier / Toolmaker:** SABIC Innovative Plastics / Not Stated
- **Material / Process:** Noryl® SE100P M-PPE / Injection molding
- **Description:** Injection molded modified-PPE resin was used for this compact Ni-MH battery module package, providing greater dimensional accuracy than glass-reinforced PBT and lower weight vs. glass-reinforced PPE/PS. The resulting assembly is 50% lighter than it would have been in competitive GR-PBT and 10% lighter than GR-PPE/PS, making it the best material choice for the required properties at low weight.

• **BATTERY PACK**

- **OEM Make & Model:** General Motors Co. 2011 MY Chevrolet® Volt® extended-range EV
- **Tier Supplier/Processor:** General Motors Co. / MANN+HUMMEL GmbH
- **Material Supplier / Toolmaker:** BASF Corp. / Omega Corp.
- **Material / Process:** Ultramid® 1503-2F PA 6/6 33% GF, HS / Injection molding
- **Description:** Thermoplastic battery frames are an integral part of electric-vehicle thermal management, channeling coolant to and from the cells. The use of injection-molded hydrolysis-resistant PA 6/6 for thermal-cycling management is a lightweight enabling material for this design, which required exacting manufacturing consistency and high levels of repeatability and reproducibility.

CATEGORY: Process / Assembly / Enabling Technologies

• **INTEGRATED LIFTGATE TRIM GRAB HANDLE**

- **OEM Make & Model:** Ford Motor Co. 2012 MY Ford® Focus® compact hatchback
- **Tier Supplier/Processor:** NYX Inc.
- **Material Supplier / Toolmaker:** Not Stated / Aalbers Tool
- **Material / Process:** PP / Injection molding
- **Description:** Through design and tooling innovations, the injection-molded polypropylene liftgate grab handle was molded in a single piece vs. previous 2-piece assemblies thanks to 3 large cavity-side slides in the tool. The innovation saved 0.1 lb and \$0.60 USD / vehicle.

• **COMPOSITE WHEEL WEIGHTS**

- **OEM Make & Model:** General Motors Co. 2011 MY Cadillac® CTS sedan & Corvette® sports car
- **Tier Supplier/Processor:** ESYS Automation / 3M
- **Material Supplier / Toolmaker:** 3M / ESYS Automation
- **Material / Process:** 3M proprietary / Extrusion
- **Description:** This innovation uses extrusion of a highly filled polymer and automation equipment to provide significant product flexibility and performance improvements that, for the first time, enable fully automated tire balance weight installation. Replacing stamped, painted steel parts that required manual installation, and reducing the SKUs from 24 to 1, the innovation uses large spools of wheel weights in tape form with an adhesive backing that can be automatically cut and applied very accurately to reduce labor, scrap, application cycles, and an average of 0.3-0.5 grams of excess weight per wheel.

• **MUCELL® INSTRUMENT PANEL**

- **OEM Make & Model:** Ford Motor Co. 2012 MY Ford® Escape® compact SUV & Kuga® compact SUV
- **Tier Supplier/Processor:** Faurecia
- **Material Supplier / Toolmaker:** SABIC Innovative Plastics & Flint Hills Resources / Lamko
- **Material / Process:** Stamax® EXRP-49 30YK270 & AP3335-HF long glass / 30% talc-filled PP / Microcellular injection molding
- **Description:** This is the largest automotive component molded in the patented MuCell injection-molding process and the first instrument panel to be molded in this process. By creating the part in microcellular foam, weight is reduced over 1 lb, mechanicals are improved, cycle time is reduced 10%, and clamp tonnage is reduced 45%, saving an estimated \$2 US / vehicle vs. solid injection molding.

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CATEGORY: Safety

• **REINFORCED AIRBAG LID IN FOAM (RALF)**

- **OEM Make & Model:** Ford Motor Co. 2011 MY Ford® Focus® compact car
- **Tier Supplier/Processor:** Faurecia Interior Systems
- **Material Supplier / Toolmaker:** Not stated / Not stated
- **Material / Process:** PET & PUR / Not stated
- **Description:** RALF technology is an optimized instrument panel / passenger airbag door system that uses a reinforced structural 3D-skeleton of PET mesh textile and polyurethane foam lid. RALF replaces the traditional metal or plastic airbag lid door and offers much improved airbag lid positioning with less risk of windshield breakage. It offers significant weight savings over traditional foam-in-place airbag construction and is cost-neutral.

• **UNDERTRAY WITH PEDESTRIAN-SAFETY FUNCTIONALITY**

- **OEM Make & Model:** Ford Motor Co. 2011 MY Ford® C-Max® world car
- **Tier Supplier/Processor:** Faurecia
- **Material Supplier / Toolmaker:** SABIC Innovative Plastics / Not stated
- **Material / Process:** Xenoy® iQ1103R PC/PBT / Injection molding
- **Description:** The undertray structure was uniquely designed with "spring-back action" to help the vehicle achieve a Euro-NCAP 5 Star rating while eliminating the need for a separate lower spoiler, saving 1.5-2.0 kg of weight and \$10-15 USD in extra cost. The lightweight corrugated structure incorporates other functional requirements, including air guides for air intake to cool the tower assembly and to meet stone chipping requirements. The PC/PBT resin used to injection mold this part is *upcycled* from post-consumer plastic waste, reducing landfill burden and hydrocarbon-fuel consumption while providing excellent impact resistance.

• **PEDESTRIAN-SAFETY UPPER LOAD PATH**

- **OEM Make & Model:** Range Rover 2011 MY Range Rover® Evoque® CUV
- **Tier Supplier/Processor:** Magna International Inc.
- **Material Supplier / Toolmaker:** SABIC Innovative Plastics / Not Stated
- **Material / Process:** Xenoy® iQ1103R PC/PBT / Injection molding
- **Description:** This 1-piece injection-molded fascia reinforcement eliminates the need for support brackets and offers tuned stiffness to control lower-leg kinematics during pedestrian impact with this cross-over utility vehicle (CUV). The fascia reinforcement, also tuned for pedestrian protection, eliminates the need for an additional energy absorber in front of the bumper beam. Good lateral rigidity and creep behavior minimizes sag during sun load. Molded-in air intake guides bring cooling air to the intercooler. The upcycled PC/PBT material used in this application is reclaimed from post-consumer plastic waste, reducing landfill burden and hydrocarbon fuel needs. The application reduced weight 20% by eliminating the metal bracket. Another 0.5-1.0 kg of weight was saved by eliminating the need for the foam energy absorber.

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Category and Grand Award winners selected during the Blue Ribbon judging will be announced on **November 9** during the ***Automotive Innovation Awards Gala*** at Burton Manor in the suburbs of Detroit. The event begins with the VIP Cocktail Reception at 4:30 p.m., generously sponsored by Ticona Engineering Polymers. At 5:00 p.m. the main exhibit area will open for general admission and guests can review this year's ***Automotive Innovation Awards*** part nominations, as well as enjoy the specialty and antique vehicles that are always a highlight of the show. Dinner will begin at 6:30 p.m. and the awards program itself will last from 7:00-9:00 p.m. For those who wish to extend merrymaking and networking activities, the ever-popular *Afterglow* – also sponsored by Ticona – will run from 9:00-11:00 p.m.

SPE's Automotive Innovation Awards Program is the oldest and largest competition of its kind in the world. Dozens of teams made up of OEMs, tier suppliers, and polymer producers submit nominations describing their part, system, or complete vehicle and why it merits the claim as the *Year's Most Innovative Use of Plastics*. This annual event typically draws 600 to 800 OEM engineers, automotive and plastics industry executives, and media. As is customary, funds raised from this event are used to support SPE educational efforts and technical seminars, which help educate and secure the role of plastics in the advancement of the automobile.

The mission of SPE is to promote scientific and engineering knowledge relating to plastics worldwide and to educate industry, academia, and the public about these advances. SPE's Automotive Division is active in educating, promoting, recognizing, and communicating technical accomplishments for all phases of plastics and plastic-based-composite developments in the global transportation industry. Topic areas include applications, materials, processing, equipment, tooling, design, and development.

For more information about the ***SPE Automotive Innovation Awards Competition and Gala***, please visit the ***SPE Automotive Division*** website at <http://speautomotive.com/inno> and <http://speautomotive.com/awa>, or contact the group at +1.248.244.8993, or write SPE Automotive Division, 1800 Crooks Road, Suite A, Troy, MI 48084, USA. For more information on the ***Society of Plastics Engineers*** or other society events, visit the ***SPE*** website at www.4spe.org, or call +1.203.775.0471.

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ATTENTION EDITORS: High-resolution digital part photography for all of the 2011 nominations may be found at <http://www.flickr.com/photos/speautomotive/collections/72157627886707996/>.