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**SPE® ACCE 2026 – AUTOMOTIVE COMPOSITES CONFERENCE & EXPO ANNOUNCES  
CALL FOR APPLICATIONS FOR ACCE & REHKOPF SCHOLARSHIPS DUE APRIL 1, 2026**

**TROY (DETROIT), MICH.** - The organizing committee for the 26th Annual SPE® Automotive Composites Conference & Expo (ACCE) invites graduate and undergraduate students to submit applications for three SPE ACCE scholarships and an additional award from the endowed scholarship funded in honor of the late Dr. Jackie Rehkopf, a long-time SPE ACCE volunteer and automotive composites expert.

Applications are due April 1, 2026 and winners will be announced prior to the 2026 SPE ACCE event, September 9 - 10, 2026 at the Vibe Credit Union Showplace in Novi, Michigan (in the Metro-Detroit area). The 2026 ACCE theme is “Composites: Advancing Mobility”.

The three ACCE scholarships are \$2,000 USD each. Two of the scholarships, given annually since 2007, are for full-time graduate students who are pursuing degrees in Polymer Science, Composites, Plastics or a related Engineering discipline. A third ACCE scholarship is available for a graduate or junior/senior undergraduate student pursuing similar academic programs.

Three letters of recommendation are required, one of which must be from the advisor or mentor of the proposed work to be pursued by the applicant. Students must also submit a succinct two-page essay explaining how their planned work will benefit polymer composites usage in an automotive or other ground-transportation application. Winners of the ACCE scholarship are invited to attend the 2026 ACCE and will be asked to present their work at the 2027 ACCE.

The Dr. Jackie Rehkopf endowed scholarship of \$5,000 USD, is for full-time graduate students, with preference given to female students. If no graduate students qualify, then two, \$2,500 USD scholarships may be awarded to undergraduate students with junior or senior standing.

Project focus should be on research activities targeted at ground transportation composite technology. Students must be in good academic standing and pursuing a degree in Polymer Science, Composites, Plastics or a related engineering discipline. A two-page essay is required showing planned work and how it will benefit composites in the automotive or other ground transportation application. One letter of recommendation must come from the student's advisor or mentor. Scholarship recipients are required to present their research project at an upcoming SPE technical conference and/or have it published in an SPE technical journal.

Scholarship award recipients will receive partial travel stipends, hotel accommodations and free conference registrations to assist with travel expenses. Applications for ACCE, Rehkopf, and other SPE scholarships, are on the SPE Foundation website: [4spe.org/scholarships](https://4spe.org/scholarships).

**The deadline for submission is April 1, 2026.**

**For more information on the ACCE and Dr. Jackie Rehkopf Scholarships, contact:** Dr. David Jack, Baylor University, 254.710.3347, [David\\_Jack@baylor.edu](mailto:David_Jack@baylor.edu).

**About the SPE ACCE:** Held annually in suburban Detroit, the ACCE draws over 400 speakers, exhibitors, sponsors and attendees and provides an environment dedicated solely to discussion, education and networking about advances in transportation composites. Its global appeal is evident in the diversity of exhibitors, speakers, and attendees who come to the conference from Europe, the Middle East, Africa, and Asia/Pacific as well as North America. About 20% of attendees work for automotive and light truck, agriculture, truck & bus or aviation OEMs and another 25% represent tier suppliers. Attendees also work for composite materials processing equipment, additives, or reinforcement suppliers; trade associations, consultancies, university and government labs; media; and investment banks. The show has been produced by the SPE Automotive and Composites Divisions since 2001.

**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 in all phases of plastics and plastic-based composite developments in the global transportation industry. SPE's Composites Division does the same with a focus on plastic-based composites in multiple industries. Topic areas include applications, materials, processing, equipment, tooling, design, and development. For more information see <https://speautomotive.com/> and <https://composites.4spe.org/>. For more information on the Society of Plastics Engineers, see [www.4spe.org](http://www.4spe.org). Photos of the 2025 ACCE Conference Student Posters and Presentations available for download via Flickr: <https://flic.kr/s/aHBqjCtcNg>

## **How to Apply for SPE ACCE & Dr. Jackie Rehkopf Scholarships**

Applicants must complete an online application and submit it to The SPE Foundation by April 1, 2026. The application link can be found at [www.4spe.org/scholarships](http://www.4spe.org/scholarships). All completed applications must include:

1. A completed student profile and application.
2. Three recommendation letters: two from teachers or school officials and one from an employer or someone who knows you well. Scholarship applications require that one recommendation letter must be from the Faculty Advisor associated with the Senior, MS, or PhD project.
3. A high school and / or college transcript for the past two years.
4. A completed resume that includes employment history, school activities, community activities, honors and special recognitions. Be especially mindful of activities, research or jobs related to plastics or polymers.
5. All applicants are eligible for Foundation General Scholarships and must submit a two-page essay that explains why you are applying for a scholarship, your qualifications, and how your study of plastics will contribute to your immediate and/or long-range career goals in the plastics industry.
6. Student membership in SPE is free and you must be a member to apply for a scholarship. If you are not a member, you can join at [4spe.org/join](http://4spe.org/join).

Complete details on Foundation General Scholarships are available from The SPE Foundation and online at [4spe.org/scholarships](http://4spe.org/scholarships). Call +1 203.740.5427 or email [foundation@4spe.org](mailto:foundation@4spe.org).