



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: (3/22/06)
SPE-EMC-02-06

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SPE[®] RELEASES PROGRAM FOR AUTOMOTIVE ENGINEERING PLASTICS CONFERENCE

***New Conference & Exhibition to Feature OEM Management Forum, Keynote
Addresses from CSM Worldwide & Honda, plus Four Technical Tracks***

TROY (DETROIT), MICH. – With a little more than a month to go, the program for the new SPE *Automotive Engineering Plastics Conference (AutoEPCON)* is nearing completion. The full-day conference and exhibition, jointly organized by the Detroit Section and Automotive Division of the Society of Plastics Engineers (SPE^{®1}) International, will be held at the Best Western Sterling Inn, Sterling Heights, Mich. (in the northeast suburbs of Detroit) on April 25. The event currently features an OEM management forum, two keynote addresses, and four technical tracks containing 22 presentations, as well as exhibits by sponsoring companies.

Registration and a continental breakfast will be held between 7:15 and 8:15 a.m. After a short introduction by event Co-Chair, Tom Pickett from General Motors Corp., the conference will begin at 8:30 a.m. with a plenary address by Michael Robinet, vice-president, Global Vehicle Forecasts at CSM Worldwide, Inc. (www.csmauto.com/). The topic of his 30-minute talk will be “2006 Updated Production Outlook – Factors Facing OEMs and Suppliers in North America.”

At 9:00 a.m., two parallel technical tracks begin, organized by Technical Program Chair, Michael Shoemaker of Dow Automotive. The focus of *Session 1-A* is *Materials* and it features five 30-minute presentations from Dow, Ticona, and DuPont. A simultaneous track, *Session 1-B*, is focused on *Design & Application Development*. This session features five 30-minute presentations from Dow, Lanxess, BASF, Bayer, and Windsor Industrial Development Laboratory, Inc. A coffee break midway through the morning program provides networking opportunities. Lunch is served from 11:45 a.m. until 12:45 p.m.

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Starting at 12:45 p.m., the afternoon sessions begin with two parallel tracks. *Session 2-A – Materials* features six 30-minute presentations from DuPont, GE, Ticona, Chevron Phillips, and DSM. Simultaneously, *Session 2-B - Design & Application Development*, continues with six papers from Ticona, Solutia, DuPont, GE, and DQR Testing. A second coffee break midway through the afternoon program provides additional networking opportunities. A complete schedule of presentations is posted at www.speautomotive.com and www.spedetroit.com.

At 4:00 p.m., the sessions end and the *AutoEPCON* Management Forum begins. This OEM panel discussion, moderated by Ron Price of Global Polymer Solutions, will feature high-ranking automotive executives in the area of Materials Engineering. Current panel participants include: Tom Edson, director, Applied Material and Manufacturing Technology, Chrysler Group, DaimlerChrysler; David Mattis, director, Materials Engineering, General Motors Corp., and Gary Witt, chief engineer – Materials, Ford Motor Company.

The *AutoEPCON* Management Forum concludes at 5:30 p.m. and is immediately followed by a cocktail reception, which provides attendees and participants further opportunities to network. At 6:30 p.m. dinner is served and at 7:00 p.m., Chief Engineer, Gary Flint from Honda R&D Americas, Inc. will give a keynote address entitled "*The Power of Dreams – The Ridgeline & More.*" The event will conclude at 8:00 p.m.

The *Automotive Engineering Plastics Conference* was conceived by SPE Automotive Division Chair, Dr. Norm Kakarala of Delphi, to fill a unique niche in the educational efforts of both the Automotive Division and the Detroit Section in promoting the benefits of plastics to the automotive industry. Annual SPE events in the Detroit area already covered topics such as thermoplastic polyolefins, thermoset and thermoplastic composites, and paint alternatives. According to Kakarala, "Highlighting the role that engineering plastics play in the automotive industry seemed a logical next step."

Both the Detroit Section and Automotive Division of SPE are actively involved in holding technical conferences each year. Conferences are an important part of both groups' charter to help educate a broad spectrum of the automotive industry on the benefits of various polymeric technologies. The automotive industry's key decision makers have indicated that they find these conferences to be one of the most effective means of learning about rapid innovations and new uses for polymeric materials.

The new *Automotive Engineering Plastics Conference* will feature technical presentations on the newest advances in materials technology, predictive engineering, process enhancements, and application developments for thermoplastic and thermoset engineering materials for the automotive industry. Tabletop exhibits will be on display throughout the event. A light lunch and a formal dinner, plus several coffee breaks will also be provided throughout the conference to allow further networking opportunities for all who attend. The all-inclusive cost of the event is \$150 USD for non-SPE members, \$125 USD for SPE members, and \$50 USD for students.

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To register for the event, please contact Cindy Job, A. Schulman Inc., at cynthia_job@us.aschulman.com or call +1.248.643.6100.

For information on sponsorship opportunities, please contact Ron Price, Global Polymer Solutions, at rprice525@aol.com or call +1.248.563.6343.

Members of the media are invited to attend the 1-day event at no charge. Pre-registration is recommended to speed entry into the conference. For media registration, contact Patricia Levine, SPE Automotive Division, spe_automotive_detroit@yahoo.com or call +1.248.244.8993.

The mission of SPE is to promote scientific and engineering knowledge relating to plastics. SPE's Automotive Division and Detroit Section work to advance plastics and plastic-based composites technologies worldwide and to educate industry, academia, and the public about these advances. Both groups are dedicated to educating, promoting, recognizing, and communicating technical accomplishments for all phases of plastics and plastic based-composite developments, including applications, materials, processing, equipment, tooling, design, and development.

For more information about the *SPE Automotive Engineering Plastics Conference*, visit the Automotive Division's website at www.speautomotive.com, or the Detroit Section's website at www.spedetroit.com, or call either group at +1.248.244.8993, or write SPE, 1800 Crooks Road, Suite A, Troy, MI 48084, USA.

For more information on the Society of Plastics Engineers International or other SPE events, visit the SPE website at www.4spe.org, or call +1.203.775.0471.

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TROY (DETROIT), MICH. – Gary Flint, chief engineer at Honda R&D Americas, Inc., will give the Dinner Keynote address at the SPE® *Automotive Engineering Plastics Conference (AutoEPCON)*, April 25, 2006, at the Best Western Sterling Inn, Sterling Heights (Detroit-area), Mich. starting at 7:00 p.m. Flint – who was the leader - Large Project for the development of the 2005 Ridgeline truck and who had overall executive responsibility from planning through development completion of the project – will give a talk entitled, "*The Power of Dreams – The Ridgeline & More.*"

Prior to his work on the Ridgeline pickup, Flint served as Body Project leader and assistant leader - Large Product for the 1999 Acura TL passenger car, and assistant project leader for both the 2001 Acura CL Coupe and the preliminary development of the 2004 Acura TL passenger car. Flint joined Honda R&D Americas in 1994 and has worked at the company's Ohio Center, home to the company's vehicle engineering design and development work in North America. Before joining Honda, Flint spent 15 years with General Motors Corp. working in a variety of areas including development of composite materials and body design. He earned a Bachelor of Science degree, *Cum Laude*, in Mechanical Engineering from Western Michigan University, Kalamazoo, Mich. He is a Licensed Professional Engineer.

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Attn. Editors: For high-resolution JPG photos of Mr. Flint or the Honda Ridgeline pickup truck, please e-mail us at p.malnati@sbcglobal.net and request a copy.

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TROY (DETROIT), MICH. – Michael Robinet, vice-president, Global Vehicle Forecasts for CSM Worldwide, Inc., is the plenary speaker for the SPE® *Automotive Engineering Plastics Conference (AutoEPCON)*, April 25, 2006, at the Best Western Sterling Inn, Sterling Heights (Detroit-area), Mich. Robinet’s talk will begin at 8:30 a.m. and is entitled: “*2006 Updated Production Outlook – Factors Facing OEMs and Suppliers in North America.*” Robinet has held his current position at CSM since 2002. His responsibilities include global sales, capacity, and production forecasting; future product / program intelligence; platform and component communization trends; OEM strategies; country-level market analysis; and supplier and OEM facility rationalization issues.

Robinet has more than 18 years’ experience in automotive forecasting, strategic analysis, and finance. He has been widely quoted on a variety of topics surrounding global light vehicle production issues by major print, radio, and television media worldwide. He has worked at CSM since 1996, when he joined the organization as director – Forecast Services. Prior to that, he worked at various research companies and in finance at a major Tier-One supplier. He holds an honors undergraduate degree in Macro & Developmental Economics and a master’s of Business Administration, both from University of Windsor, Windsor, Ontario, Canada.

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