



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: (10/31/09)**

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## **SPE<sup>®</sup> NAMES HALL OF FAME WINNER FOR 39<sup>TH</sup>-ANNUAL AUTOMOTIVE INNOVATION AWARDS COMPETITION**

**TROY, (DETROIT) MICH.** – The Automotive Division of the Society of Plastics Engineers (SPE<sup>®</sup>) International today announced the *Hall of Fame* winner for its 39th-annual *Automotive Innovation Awards Competition*, the oldest and largest recognition event in the automotive and plastics industries. To be considered for the *Hall of Fame Award*, a part must have been in continuous service in some form for at least 15 years and preferably have been widely adapted within the automotive or ground-transportation industries. This year's winner meets these qualifications: it is the first use of an engineering thermoplastic on a vertical body panel – the front fenders on the 1987MY Buick<sup>®</sup> LeSabre<sup>®</sup> T-Type<sup>1</sup> sports coupe produced by then General Motors Corp (GM) using Noryl GTX<sup>®</sup> 910 resin, an MPPE/PA<sup>2</sup> copolymer supplied by then GE Plastics (now SABIC Innovative Plastics, Pittsfield, Mass.).

The automaker's success with this application was quickly translated into thermoplastic fenders on the 1987MY Buick Reatta<sup>®</sup> sports coupe, then other 1988—1995 C&H-platform vehicles, and in GM's 1989-2005 Saturn<sup>®</sup> passenger vehicles, all of whose exterior vertical body panels were thermoplastic. In fact, over 45 platforms and 20-million vehicles globally have used or currently use this material. Thermoplastic body panels have since been translated beyond automotive to tractors and lawnmowers for home and agricultural use.

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<sup>1</sup> The T-type designation indicated a performance package on GM's H-platform vehicles in the late-'80s-to-mid-'90s

<sup>2</sup> MPPE/PA = Modified-Polyphenylene Ether / Polyamide (nylon)

*SPE Names Hall of Fame Winner for 2009 Automotive Innovation Awards Competition*  
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A team at GE worked for more than 5 years to develop a polymer that would fulfill GM's requirements for a material that was high quality, lightweight, damage and corrosion resistant, and compatible with then current body-build practices and paint systems. GM's own engineering group reviewed, tested, and rejected 160 different materials from 17 resin suppliers before settling on the MPPE/PA grade.

Noryl GTX resin had the thermal stability to endure online priming and painting, allowing them to be assembled to the body-in-white (BIW). Furthermore, the polymer alloy offered low-temperature impact strength, very-good thermal stability, broad chemical resistance, low mold shrinkage, low moisture absorption (vs. nylon alone), and good dimensional stability. The injection-molded parts produced a Class A surface out of the tool, eliminating multiple secondary operations required with steel, SMC, or RIM prior to painting. Making the switch from steel to thermoplastic enabled GM to reduce part weight 40% (4 lb/1.8 kg vs. 7.3 lb/3.3 kg in steel) and eliminate denting and corrosion. GM's Buick Factory 8 in Flint, Mich. molded the first fenders for the Buick LeSabre T-Type sports coupe and Delta Tooling (Auburn Hills, Mich.) produced the original injection molds for this program.

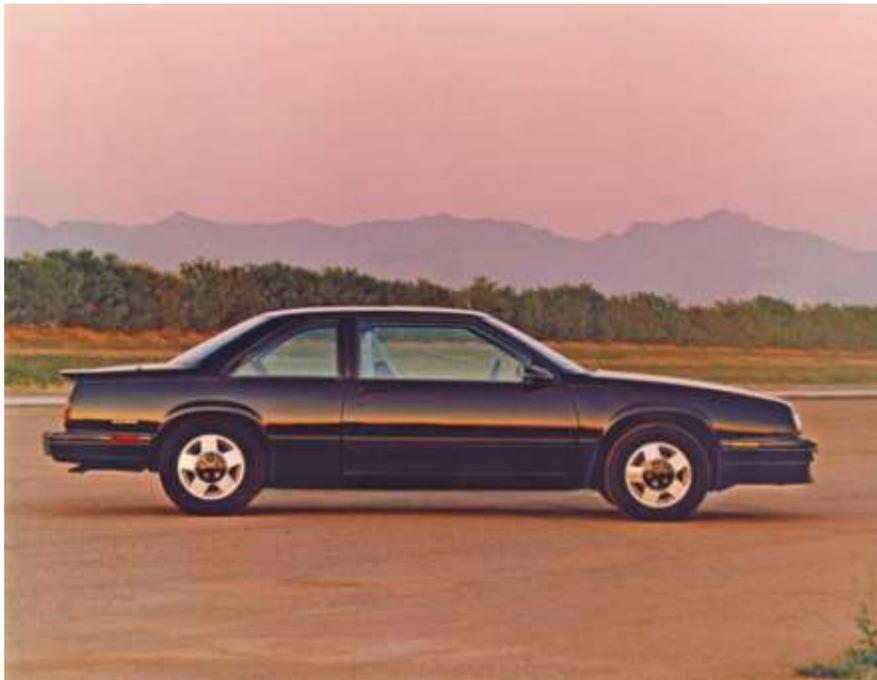
Dave Malik, director-Front & Rear Closures, and Henry Brockman, lead engineer, both from General Motors Co., will accept the award on Nov. 12 at SPE's annual ***Automotive Innovation Awards Gala*** at Burton Manor ([www.Burtonmanor.net](http://www.Burtonmanor.net)) in Livonia, Mich. At 5:30 p.m. the 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 program itself runs from 7:00-9:00 p.m. For those who wish to extend merrymaking and networking, the ever-popular *Afterglow* –sponsored by Ticona Engineering Polymers – will run from 9:00-11:00 p.m.

The mission of SPE International 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 ***Automotive Innovation Awards Competition and Gala*** or to download nomination forms and rules, visit the SPE Automotive Division's website at [www.speautomotive.com/inno.htm](http://www.speautomotive.com/inno.htm) , 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 International or other SPE events, visit the SPE website at [www.4spe.org](http://www.4spe.org), or call +1.203.775.0471.

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**TROY, (DETROIT) MICH.** – The first use of an engineering thermoplastic on a vertical body panel is being honored by the Automotive Division of the Society of Plastics Engineers (SPE®) International. The group has chosen the front fenders on the 1987MY Buick® LeSabre® T-Type sports coupe produced by then General Motors Corp. as the **Hall of Fame** winner for its 39th-annual **Automotive Innovation Awards Competition**, the oldest and largest recognition event in the automotive and plastics industries. The fenders were molded from Noryl GTX® 910 resin, an MPPE/PA copolymer supplied by then GE Plastics (now SABIC Innovative Plastics, Pittsfield, Mass.). Delta Tooling (Auburn Hills, Mich.) produced the original injection tools for this program. Success with this application led to proliferation of thermoplastic vertical body panels on passenger cars and minivans produced by automakers worldwide and even translated into agriculture and lawn & garden applications. The award will be presented on Nov. 12 at SPE's annual **Automotive Innovation Awards Gala** at Burton Manor ([www.Burtonmanor.net](http://www.Burtonmanor.net)) in Livonia, Mich.

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