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SPE[®] ANNOUNCES CALL FOR PART NOMINATIONS FOR 39TH AUTOMOTIVE INNOVATION AWARDS COMPETITION

TROY, (DETROIT) MICH. – The Automotive Division of the Society of Plastics Engineers (SPE[®]) International today issued a *Call for Part Nominations* for its 39th-annual ***Automotive Innovation Awards Competition & Gala***. For almost four decades, this event has honored the "Most Innovative Use of Plastics" in automotive applications, becoming the largest competition of its kind in the world and the oldest and largest recognition event in the automotive and plastics industries. The part nomination form and competition rules are available at www.speautomotive.com/inno.htm. Nominations are due September 1, 2009 for applications that will appear on vehicles in commercial production no later than by November 1, 2009.

During the competition phase of the event, dozens of teams made up of OEMs, tier suppliers, consultants, and polymer producers work for months to hone submission forms and presentations describing their part, system, or complete vehicle module and why it merits the claim as the year's "Most Innovative Use of Plastics." To win, teams must survive a pre-competition review and two rounds of presentations before industry and media judges. Winners are announced at the ***Automotive Innovation Awards Gala***, an annual event that typically draws 600-800 OEM engineers, automotive- and plastics-industry executives, and media. This glittering evening of celebration honors innovation and the hardworking teams that bring it to market.

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SPE Issues Call for Part Nominations for 39th-Annual Innovation Awards Competition
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Since 1970, the **SPE Automotive Innovation Awards Competition** has highlighted the positive changes that polymeric materials have brought to the automotive industry, such as weight reduction, parts consolidation, and enhanced aesthetics and design freedom. At the time the competition started, many OEM designers and engineers thought of plastics as inexpensive replacements for more "traditional" materials. To help communicate that plastics were capable of far more functionality than their typical use as decorative knobs and ashtrays indicated, members of SPE's Automotive Division Board of Directors created the **Automotive Innovation Awards Competition** to recognize successful and innovative plastics applications and to communicate their benefits to OEMs, media, and the public. Over the years, the competition has drawn attention to plastics as an underutilized design tool and made industry aware of more progressive ways of designing, engineering, and manufacturing automotive components.

From its humble beginnings, the competition has grown to be one of the most fiercely contested recognition events in the plastics and automotive industries. Today, polymeric materials are no longer substitutes for more expensive materials, but rather are the materials of choice in hundreds of different applications throughout the vehicle. Without plastics, many of the auto industry's most common comfort, control, and safety applications would not be possible. Current competition categories include:

- Body Exterior,
- Body Interior,
- Chassis / Hardware,
- Environmental,
- Hall of Fame,
- Materials,
- Performance & Customization
(Automotive Aftermarket),
- Process / Assembly / Enabling
Technologies,
- Powertrain, and
- Safety.

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, 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, or call +1.203.775.0471.

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