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SPE® ANNOUNCES DATE, LOCATION, AND THEME FOR 41st-ANNUAL AUTOMOTIVE INNOVATION AWARDS GALA

TROY, (DETROIT) MICH. – The Automotive Division of the Society of Plastics Engineers (SPE®) today announced the date, location, and theme for its 41st-annual ***Automotive Innovation Awards Gala***, the oldest and largest recognition event in the automotive and plastics industries. This year's event will be held **Wednesday, November 9, 2011** at Burton Manor (www.burtonmanor.net) in Livonia, Mich.

Jeffrey Helms, global automotive director, Ticona Engineering Polymers, who returns as the 2011 ***SPE Automotive Innovation Awards*** chair said, "This year's competition and gala theme is ***Passion to Innovate***, which really captures the excitement that's in the air as the global automotive industry continues to recover from the 2008-2009 downturn. The level of innovation we've seen among nominations at the past few years' competition – parts that would have been designed during the worst part of the recession – underscores how hard automakers and their suppliers are working to add function and value, improve aesthetics and durability, and reduce weight and cost on virtually every component throughout the vehicle. It's an exciting time to be in the automotive plastics industry and we're eagerly anticipating our review of this year's nominations for our 41st ***Automotive Innovation Awards Competition***."

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SPE Announces Date, Theme for 41st-Annual Innovation Awards Competition

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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** or to download nomination forms and rules for this year's competition, 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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