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SPE® TPO AUTOMOTIVE ENGINEERED POLYOLEFINS CONFERENCE SPORTS EXPANDED TECHNICAL PROGRAM

TROY, (DETROIT) MICH. – The fourteenth-annual *SPE® TPO Automotive Engineered Polyolefins Conference*, the *world's leading automotive engineered-polyolefins forum*, returns **September 30-October 3, 2012** with a record number of technical sessions and topics scheduled to be presented. The three-day conference, which is organized by the **Detroit Section** of the **Society of Plastics Engineers (SPE®)**, will feature nine technical sessions and 65 presentations – significantly more than the typical six sessions and 40-45 presentations given at the show in previous years. Event organizers also report record sponsorship and exhibitions for the 2012 conference.

Technical Program Co-Chair, Dr. Norm Kakarala, senior technical fellow, Inteva Products, explains “Our planning committee works hard every year to develop rich new educational content for the Auto TPO’s technical program. Our goal is not only to highlight the latest technology advances in this field but, equally important, to offer excellent networking opportunities for participants throughout the TPO supply chain. We know from feedback that this combination provides real value to our attendees. It’s a big reason we draw significant OEM and tier supplier presence and why the conference keeps growing. This year, we’re particularly pleased to be able to offer a custom-tailored session on TPO fundamentals to help automotive engineers build the background necessary to understand and specify these versatile materials.”

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*SPE Auto TPO Conference Sports Expanded Technical Program
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The ***Automotive Interior Trim & Skins session***, chaired by Bob Eller, Robert Eller Assoc. LLC and Yvonne Bankowski of Ford Motor Co., has eight scheduled presentations. Topics in this area include lean process technologies for interior soft-trim fabrication; materials/fabrication technology comparisons (slush molding, thermoforming, two-shot molding, etc.); the role of foams in reducing interior soft-trim costs; sustainable surface-materials concepts and trends in interior decoration. Participants in this session represent LyondellBasell, Kraton Polymers LLC, Benecke-Kaliko AG, Zylog Plastalloys Pvt., Ltd., Haartz Corp., SO.F.TER. SpA, Sumitomo Chemical Co., Ltd., and Robert Eller Assoc. LLC.

Mike Balow, Plastics North America, Inc. and Ermanno Ruccolo of Mitsui Plastics, Inc. chair the ***Rigid Polyolefin Compounds & Masterbatches session***, which has eight scheduled papers from companies that include Innovative Plastic & Molding, RheTech, Inc., PPG Industries, Inc., imat-ue Group GmbH, Asahi Kasei, Japan Polypropylene Corp., and ExxonMobil Chemical Co.. Presented topics will cover glass-fiber-reinforced materials and technology improvements; regulatory and environmental influences on developments of compounds; tackling volatile organic compound (VOC) emissions in rigid compounds; and formulating at-the-press technology with masterbatches.

The Automotive TPEs session, chaired by Bob Eller, Robert Eller Assoc. and Jeff Valentage, ExxonMobil, features eight presentations from CTS Compound Technology Services, Dow Elastomers, Vintech Industries, Inc., Cooper Standard, JYCO Sealing Technologies, Dynasol Elastomers, and SaarGummi International GmbH. Subjects planned for this session include intermaterial competition between TPEs; benefits of TPEs vs. incumbent materials; future prospects for TPEs in automotive applications; role of TPEs in reducing part weight; TPE breakthrough technologies; and factors driving TPE substitution.

Chairs David Okonski and Charles Buehler, both of General Motors Co., have nine presentations scheduled for their session on ***Part Design, Tooling Considerations, & Processing Guidelines for TPO***, which will cover use of moldfilling analysis for upfront design for manufacturing analysis; material properties vs. moldfilling analysis accuracy; P20 steel and aluminum tooling standards; first-shots injection molding procedures/requirements; best practices for troubleshooting part defects; and effect of nozzle and/or screw design on at-the-press compounding. This session's participants will represent Polycon Industries, Inc., LyondellBasell, ExxonMobil, Borealis Compounds Inc., University of Massachusetts-Lowell, Asahi Kasei, General Motors, Ford, and Alcoa, Inc.

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Laura Soreide, Ford and Dr. Jay Raison, Asahi Kasei are chairing the ***Lightweight TPO Structural Applications session***, which will focus on new lightweighting developments for TPOs; TPO success stories – metal and other plastics-to-TPO substitution; molding process options; carbon, basalt, and glass-fiber reinforced parts; and an actual case study on the Project Team Approach – design, tooling, process, and material perspectives. Seven speakers will participate in this session representing ExxonMobil, Borealis Polyolefine GmbH, Hyundai Kia America Technical Center (HATCI), 3M Co., Faurecia Automotive, and Oakland University.

The ***Advances in Automotive Polyolefins session***, chaired by Patti Tibbenham of Ford and Neil Fuenmayor of LyondellBasell, will feature a plenary talk given by Kathy Minnich, Ford Materials Engineering Manager on “*Material & Supplier Selection: Global Challenges and Evolving Expectations.*” This plenary address will be followed by six presentations from companies that include Chrysler Group LLC, LyondellBasell, Macro-M, ExxonMobil, Dow Chemical, and Asahi Kasei. The session will cover new application areas; sustainable TPO materials with a focus on technically challenging applications; developments in traditional and novel additives to improve product developments; and global implementation of TPO grades to meet OEM specifications and platforms worldwide.

Dr. Rose Ryntz, International Automotive Components (IAC) Group and Dr. Laura Shereda, Inteva Products LLC are chairing the ***Surface Enhancements session***, which features eight speakers discussing topics like painting of TPO (including new paint systems, metallic paints, clear coats, and primers); update on colorability enhancements in TPOs; developments for improved scratch & mar; TPO grades for improved paint adhesion or aesthetics; and process developments for surface-finish improvements. Participating organizations include Texas A&M University, Asahi Kasei, Clariant Corp., MacDermid Inc., Cytac Industries Inc., KRAIBURG TPE GmbH & Co. KG, ADEKA USA Corp., and Amfine Chemical Corp.

The ***Understanding TPOs – Formulation & Compounding Process session*** also has nine speakers who will discuss issues related to selection of polyolefin resins for performance needs; effect of impact modifiers on product performance; role of fillers in reinforcements and/or lightweighting; processing aids for improved dispersion; stabilization for service life; coloring effects on material/part performance; and effect of compounding process on morphology for performance. Chaired by Hoa Pham of Avery Dennison Corp. and Tom Traugott of Advanced Composites, the session features speakers from Botkin Chemie, Texas A&M University, Chemtura Inc., ExxonMobil, Imerys Talc, Advanced Composites, Dow Elastomers, Uniform Colors Co., and Q-Lab Corp.

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The last session, **Large Part Thermoforming**, is chaired by Ed Bearse, Advanced Plastics Consultants and will feature five speakers discussing actual TPO case studies on thermoformed parts, new TPO resins specifically formulated for the thermoforming process, and the future of the TPO thermoforming process. Companies scheduled to participate in this session include Mytex Polymers U.S. Corp., Arkema, Inc., Premier Material Concepts, and LyondellBasell.

Technical Program Co-Chair, Peter Grelle, president, Plastics Fundamentals Group LLC adds, "Our significantly expanded technical program this year allows us to offer something for almost everyone. We have numerous processes represented, updates on new and improved materials ranging from TPOs to TPEs and TPVs as well as rigid engineered olefins – from pellets to sheetstock – are on the agenda, as are additives, colorants, design and analysis concerns, process controls, tooling considerations, and new and innovative applications. We have worked really hard to pull together a conference that will provide high value and excellent networking opportunities for attendees."

Apparently, sponsors and exhibitors agree, since a record number of companies have signed up to participate in this year's show. Support for the 2012 SPE TPO conference is being provided by: **Platinum-Level Sponsors**, Advanced Composites*, ExxonMobil Chemical Co.* SABIC Innovative Plastics*, and Trinity Resources*; **Gold-Level Sponsors**, Benecke-Kaliko AG*, Borealis AG*, Chem-Trend*, CIMBAR Performance Minerals*, The Dow Chemical Co.*, Imerys Talc*, Inteva Products LLC, LyondellBasell Industries*, Milliken & Co.*, Mitsui Plastics, Inc.*, Mytex Polymers U.S. Corp.*, NYCO Minerals*, PolyOne*, Robert Eller Associates LLC*, Styron LLC*, Sumitomo Chemical America, Inc.*, Washington Penn*, and Zylog*; **Exhibitors**, Adchem Corp., Addcomp North America, Inc., Americhem, Inc., Asahi Kasei Plastics North America, Inc., A. Schulman, BASF Corp., Borche North America, BYK Gardner USA (A Member of Altana), Chemtura, Inc., Elastron-Kimya San. Tic. A.S., Evonik Industries AG, Flint Hills Resources, IMI Fabi LLC, JSR Trading, Inc., Macro-M, Noble Polymers, Premier Material Concepts (PMC), Reliable Analysis, Inc., RheTech, Inc., Spartech Corp., Techmer PM, and United Paint & Chemical Corp.; **Coffee-Break Sponsor**, International Automotive Components (IAC) Group; **Media / Association Sponsors**, Automotive Design & Production magazine, AutoFieldBlog.com, Automotive NewsWire, China Plastics & Rubber Journal and China Plastics & Rubber Journal International magazines, Global Automotive Lightweight Materials Conference, Modern Plastics India Magazine, Plastics Engineering magazine, Plastics Technology magazine, Plaspec Global Plastics Selector, Polymotive magazine, PrototypeToday.com, TheMoldingBlog.com, Rubber World magazine, TPE magazine, and Ward'sAuto.com.

(*Denotes sponsor is also an exhibitor)

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About the TPO Conference

Since 1998, the ***SPE TPO Automotive Engineered Polyolefins Conference*** has highlighted the importance of rigid and flexible polyolefins throughout the automobile – in applications ranging from semi-structural composite underbody shields and front-end modules to soft-touch interior skins and bumper fascia. Engineered polyolefins have been the fastest-growing segment of the global plastics industry for more than a decade owing to their excellent cost/performance ratio. The show typically draws approximately 500 attendees from 20 countries on four continents who are interested in learning about the latest in rigid and elastomeric TPO as well as TPE and TPV technologies. Fully a third of conference attendees say they work for a transportation OEM, and roughly 20% work for a tier integrator/molder, with the balance from materials or reinforcement suppliers, equipment OEMs, industry consultants, and members of academia. This year's conference returns to the Troy Marriott in the Detroit suburbs. A variety of sponsorship packages are available for companies interested in showcasing their products and/or services.

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 Detroit Section is active in educating, promoting, recognizing, and communicating technical accomplishments for all phases of plastics and plastic based-composite developments – particularly in the automotive industry. Topic areas include applications, materials, processing, equipment, tooling, design, and development.

For more information about the ***SPE TPO Automotive Engineered Polyolefins Conference***, to view the conference's evolving technical program, or to register to attend the event, please visit <http://auto-tpo.com/> or <http://speautomotive.com/tpo.htm>, or call the group at +1.248.244.8993, or write SPE Detroit Section, 1800 Crooks Road, Suite A, Troy, MI 48084, USA. For more information on the Society of Plastics Engineers or other SPE events, visit the SPE website at www.4spe.org, or call +1.203.775.0471.

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