

# Welcome from the 2013 SPE®



On behalf of the Automotive and Composites Divisions of the Society of Plastics Engineers, welcome to the 13<sup>th</sup>- annual Automotive Composites Conference and Exhibition. This year we have relocated our conference to accommodate significant demand and growth. We are excited about the changes and believe you will gain even more value from this year's event. We continue to offer you *the world's leading automotive composites forum* and have attracted presenters, exhibitors, and attendees from around the globe.

Once again, we have the largest technical program and the most sponsors and exhibitors in our 13 year history. This year's theme is "*Composites: Lightweighting the Cars of Tomorrow.*" Clearly, our focus on the utilization of composites in automotive has not changed, and with the industry's drive to reduce the weight in vehicles, the conference is even more germane. Composites offer extreme adaptability and flexibility in design as well as the promise of major weight savings.

This year we have:

- Over 90 peer-reviewed technical papers plus 7 industry-leading keynote speakers;
- 1 panel discussion on *Aluminum & Composites — Compete or Collaborate?*;
- Our largest Graduate Poster Competition to date;
- Three peer reviewed student scholarship awards with one specifically for a Michigan student and all 3 sponsored by the Michigan Economic Development Corporation;
- Our second Composite Parts Competition — newly expanded to 3 categories: *Body Interior, Body Exterior, and a People's Choice* award so all conference attendees can vote for their favorite part (ballot included in your program guide);
- ACCE Best Paper Awards;
- A wonderful array of exhibitors and sponsors;
- Two cocktail receptions: one sponsored by Momentive and the second by Autodesk Inc.;
- And, just as important, a small friendly environment that fosters networking with suppliers, colleagues, and customers.

It is an honor to co-chair the ACCE for 2013. This is my third and final year as leader of the conference. It has been an exciting time to lead this great committee and oversee the growth of the event. I specifically wish to thank the executive committee for their tireless efforts over the course of the year. This committee includes Dr. Michael Connolly, Peggy Malnati, Teri Chouinard, and Dale Brosius. The planning committee for the ACCE is a volunteer group of industry experts dedicated to the growth of composites and passionate about the automotive business. It is my humble responsibility to be the face of this great group of professionals from both the Automotive and the Composites Divisions of SPE. It is a year long process to bring you the ACCE and requires the dedicated support of our committee.

I also want to personally thank all our authors and presenters, keynote speakers, panel members, sponsors, exhibitors, and attendees. Please take advantage of this unique composites conference and the opportunities it presents to help you in your quest to lightweight vehicles through greater utilization of composites!

Enjoy the conference and please contact any of our planning committee members if you have questions or feedback for us.

Kind Regards,

*Craig Bowland*

Craig Bowland  
Co-Chair, SPE ACCE 2013  
PPG Industries



# ACCE Conference Chairs



Good morning, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Like my co-chair Creig, I would like to welcome you to the 13th-annual SPE Automotive Composites Conference & Exhibition.

Hopefully, most of our returning visitors have noticed that we're not in our usual surroundings. That's because, like the automotive composites industry, the volume (of attendees, speakers, and exhibitors) is on the increase for our conference and that necessitated that we make changes in our venue. Much the same thing is happening to OEMs and their supply network right now. We find ourselves in exciting times both for the SPE ACCE and for the automotive composites industry.

I hail from the U.K. and these days I spend my time hopping between there, Germany, and Spain. In Europe this August two long-anticipated events finally arrived. The first was the birth of the royal prince to Kate and William, and the second was the world launch of the all-electric, predominantly composite BMW® i3 city car.

This vehicle represents a lot of firsts, but perhaps most significantly it represents the first time a composites supply chain has specifically been set up to deliver an every-day vehicle rather than a high-performance rocket ship. The i3 was designed not for success on the race track but rather to be lightweight and affordable — not only in terms of initial purchase price but also operating costs year to year. It also is significant because it uses carbon composites that were specifically designed for the automotive industry's needs, not just lower priced, downscaled aerospace materials. This is an important milestone because when volumes are relatively small (as in the supercar market), and when someone's buying based on race heritage (so purchase price can be quite high), then it probably makes sense to use aerospace technology. However, when target costs are much lower and target volumes much higher, then the automotive industry needs its own materials designed to meet its own particular needs, and that's what we've got on the i3: new resin, lower cost fibres, new faster and lower cost processing techniques, and new lower vehicle costs for a predominantly composites-intensive vehicle. Hence it represents a great start to making significantly lighter weight cars for tomorrow.

So, sit back, enjoy yourselves, listen to the technical presentations, and visit the suppliers who today are working hard to make those cars of tomorrow today. And definitely take advantage of the excellent networking opportunities this annual conference brings.

Cheers,

*Antony Dodworth*

Antony Dodworth  
Co-Chair, SPE ACCE 2013  
Dodworth Design

