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DAIMLERCHRYSLER'S EDSON TO BE HONORED FOR EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP AT SPE® INNOVATION AWARDS THIS NOVEMBER

SPE's Second Executive Leadership Award Winner Acknowledged for his Auto-Industry Leadership, Support for Integrating Polymeric Materials on Vehicles

TROY (DETROIT), MICH. – Tom Edson, director – Applied Material and Manufacturing Technology, Advanced Vehicle Engineering at DaimlerChrysler has been named as this year's recipient of the *Executive Leadership Award* by the SPE® Automotive Division. Edson, who has both demonstrated automotive industry leadership and helped advance the use of new polymeric materials in auto applications, will receive his award at the SPE Automotive Division's 35th-annual *Innovation Awards Gala* on November 16, at Burton Manor in Livonia, Mich.

The *Executive Leadership Award* was started in 2004 and honors automotive executives who have demonstrated leadership in integrating polymeric materials on global vehicle platforms and who have been recognized within the industry as well as in their community as leaders. In contrast to the Automotive Division's other executive accolade – the *Lifetime Achievement Award*, given to honorees who have been directly involved in fostering the technical advances of polymers in automobiles – recipients of the *Executive Leadership Award* must have led their company to profitability, increased marketshare, and been at the helm of commercially successful new vehicle launches. The award's first recipient was Jim Padilla, chief operating officer and president of Global Automotive Operations, Ford Motor Company.

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DaimlerChrysler's Edson to Receive Executive Leadership Honor at SPE Innovation Awards Gala
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Edson has more than 33 years of experience at DaimlerChrysler, holding positions in Vehicle Development, Program Management, Body Engineering, Interior Engineering, Chassis Engineering, Proving Ground, and Vehicle Dynamics. He was selected as the winner of this year's *Executive Leadership Award* because of his dual experience in business leadership and as a technical champion. He has demonstrated business leadership during successful new vehicle launches, such as the family of DaimlerChrysler minivans and the PT Cruiser multipurpose vehicle. On the technical side, he has overseen selection and integration of polymeric materials into numerous automotive applications. For example, he was a member of the SPE-recognized award-winning team that developed the patented, multi-position PT Cruiser shelf-panel. Additionally, he has demonstrated receptiveness to suppliers approaching DaimlerChrysler with new technologies and concepts for polymeric applications, and he has provided opportunities for suppliers to demonstrate their innovation.

According to Suzanne Cole, president of Cole and Associates and the 2005 SPE *Innovation Awards Gala* program chair, "Tom has a great eye for design – from the big picture down to the smallest detail. He also has an amazing memory, retaining details about past projects, which is one of the ways he helps keep suppliers from repeating earlier mistakes. As a supplier, you have to be prepared when you meet with him. He knows how to cut right through the fluff and ask the difficult questions. However, if you are prepared and you can deliver results, then Tom will support you all the way to the top.

Continues Cole, "I have never met a person who had a negative word to say about Tom Edson. It is indeed a pleasure to name him as our *2005 SPE Automotive Executive Leader*, as he encompasses many of the characteristics that are sometimes difficult to find in a true leader."

In his current position, Edson is responsible for seeking out new technologies and materials for introduction into production vehicles within a 2-3 year timeframe. As the former director of Body and Interior Engineering – Liberty and Technical Affairs, he worked on development of midsize plastics-intensive composite vehicles and was a champion of extruded paint-film technology to eliminate paint on specific components. He has demonstrated a strong commitment to education and development of engineers at both DaimlerChrysler and elsewhere. He has provided longstanding support of SPE's Automotive Division and Detroit Section conferences, technical symposia, and other events.

Edson holds a B.S. degree in Engineering Mechanics and an M.S. degree in Mechanical Engineering from the University of Michigan, as well as an M.S. degree in Engineering Management from University of Detroit-Mercy, and an M.B.A. from Michigan State University. He started his education and career at the former Chrysler Institute of Engineering. He also is a member of the Materials Technical Leadership Council on USCAR, and the Joint Policy Board of the Auto/Steel Partnership.

Prior to the start of the *Innovation Awards Gala*, Edson will be honored along with Mr. Shigeki Suzuki, general manager of the Materials Engineering Division of Toyota Motor Corporation in Japan and this year's SPE *Lifetime Achievement Award* winner, at a VIP cocktail reception reserved for program sponsors and senior-level automotive executives. Last year, several supplier executives attending the reception called it "One of the absolute best networking opportunities in town."

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DaimlerChrysler is unique in the automotive industry: its product portfolio ranges from small cars to sports cars and luxury sedans; and from versatile vans to heavy-duty trucks or comfortable coaches. DaimlerChrysler's passenger car brands include Maybach, Mercedes-Benz, Chrysler, Jeep[®], Dodge, and smart. Commercial vehicle brands include Mercedes-Benz, Freightliner, Sterling, Western Star, Setra, and Mitsubishi Fuso. It offers financial and other automotive services through DaimlerChrysler Financial Services.

The company's strategy rests on four pillars: global presence, superior products, leading brands, and innovation / technology leadership. DaimlerChrysler has a global workforce and a global shareholder base. With 384,723 employees, DaimlerChrysler achieved revenues of EUR 142.1 billion (USD 192.3 billion) in 2004.

SPE's *Innovation Awards Gala* is the 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 module and why it merits the claim as *Year's Most Innovative Use of Plastics*. This annual event – unofficially known as the Academy Awards[®] of the plastics and automotive industries – typically draws over 700 OEM engineers, automotive and plastics industry executives, and media. As is customary, funds raised from this event will be used to support SPE educational efforts and technical seminars, which help to secure the role of plastics in the advancement of the automobile.

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 SPE *Innovation Awards Gala*, visit the SPE Automotive Division's website at www.speautomotive.com, 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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TROY (DETROIT), MICH. – Tom Edson, director – Applied Material and Manufacturing Technology, Advanced Vehicle Engineering at DaimlerChrysler has been named as the second recipient of the prestigious *Executive Leadership Award* by the SPE® Automotive Division. The award, which was first given in 2004, seeks to honor those automotive industry executives who have demonstrated business leadership while also supporting the use of polymeric materials on global vehicle platforms. Edson will receive his award at SPE's 35th-annual *Innovation Awards Gala* on November 16, at Burton Manor in Livonia, Mich.

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