



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: (11/14/06)**

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## SPE® AUTOMOTIVE DIVISION ANNOUNCES 2006 WINNERS OF *AUTOMOTIVE INNOVATION AWARDS* COMPETITION

**TROY, (DETROIT) MICH.** – At its 36<sup>th</sup>-annual *Automotive Innovation Awards Gala* on November 13, the Automotive Division of the Society of Plastics Engineers (SPE®) International announced category and **Grand Award** winners for this year's *Most Innovative Use of Plastics* competition. The competition is the oldest and largest recognition event in the automotive and plastics industries, and the gala is considered to be among the best networking opportunities in the North American automotive communities. The gala event is typically attended by over 800 transportation and plastics industry leaders, engineers, and media.

This year's *Grand Award Winner*, as well as *Body Exterior* category winner was the **BLOW-MOLDED FRONT & REAR BUMPER SYSTEM** on the '07 Model Year (MY) *Chrysler Group Jeep® Wrangler SUV*. This was the first Class-A blow-molded, all-plastic bumper that combined fascia and beam functionality. It replaced a traditional steel application and offered a 12% piece-cost and assembly-cost reduction as well as a 9% weight reduction. Furthermore, the design meets domestic impact performance and European safety requirement while complying with OEM styling objectives. Contributing team members included:

- System Supplier: ABC Group Inc.
- Material Processor: ABC Group Inc.
- Material Supplier: Salflex Polymers (ABC Group)
- Resin: Salflex® 610 MW - RXF TPO
- Tooling Supplier: Supreme Tooling (ABC Group)

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*SPE Announces Winners of 36<sup>th</sup>-Annual Innovation Awards Competition*  
2-2-2-2

The winner in the **Body Interior** category was the **IN-LINE COMPOUNDED STRUCTURAL DUCT ASSEMBLY** featured on the '07 MY Chrysler Group Dodge Nitro SUV. This is the first application of in-line compounding / injection molding for a 2-piece, vibration-welded instrument panel structural-duct assembly. The thermoplastic polyolefin (TPO) IP retainer (base panel) is subsequently welded to the structural duct, which has a Class-A finish. Overall assembly cost savings due to materials usage (polypropylene (PP) vs. polycarbonate / acrylonitrile butadiene styrene (PC/ABS)) is approximately 15%. The nominating team included:

System Supplier: Intertec Systems  
Material Processor: Intertec Systems  
Material Supplier: Basell Polyolefins  
Resin: Profax<sup>®</sup> SG853 polypropylene  
Tooling Supplier: Phillips Tool & Mould Limited

In the **Chassis / Hardware** category, the winner was the **RAIL-LESS WINDOW REGULATOR** also on the '07 MY Chrysler Group Dodge Nitro SUV – Description: This is the first integrated, cable-driven, rail-less window regulator system for door modules. The innovative carrier integrates the drum housing and utilizes an industry-first, robotically extruded thermoplastic seal to form the separation between wet and dry sides. The application achieved a weight savings of 25% as well as a direct cost savings. The team that contributed to this application included:

System Supplier: Faurecia Interior Systems  
Material Processor: Faurecia Interior Systems  
Material Supplier: St. Gobain / ExxonMobil  
Resin: Twintex<sup>®</sup> comingled glass / polypropylene roving and polypropylene  
Tooling Supplier: Omega

The **Environmental** category winner was the **FIBERGLASS-FREE HEADLINER** on the '07 MY Honda Motor Company Honda<sup>®</sup> Acura<sup>®</sup> MDX SUV. This application uses a non-glass-fiber reinforcement, which enables complete disposal (incineration) of the headliner by the OEM vehicle recycler. Incinerating fiberglass headliners causes huge disposal issues, especially in Japan and Europe. The basalt-reinforced PP composite meets the OEM's disposal requirements without incinerator contamination issues. The key team members for this development include:

System Supplier: M-Tek, Inc.  
Material Processor: M-Tek, Inc.  
Material Supplier: Azdel, Inc.  
Resin: VolcaLite<sup>™</sup> basalt-reinforced PP composite  
Tooling Supplier: not available

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3-3-3-3

The winning nomination for this year's **Materials** category was the **THERMOPLASTIC VULCANIZATE (TPV) PRIMARY SEAL** on the **'07 MY Chrysler Group Dodge Ram pickup**. This application is the first TPV body-mounted primary seal used in a complete dynamic-sealing application. The new TPV material used for this application is an EPDM-sponge equivalent that enables the transition from thermoset rubber to thermoplastic elastomer. Estimated cost savings of 20% were achieved. The company responsible for this development was:

System Supplier: JYCO  
Material Processor: JYCO  
Material Supplier: JYCO  
Resin: JyFlex™ thermoplastic vulcanizate (TPV)  
Tooling Supplier: JYCO

For the **Performance & Customization** category, which captures aftermarket innovations and was added to the competition two years ago, the winning entry was the **FLUSH REAR CENTER SLIDING WINDOW ASSEMBLY** on the **'07 MY General Motors GMT800 pickups**. This flush rear center sliding window assembly provides a pleasing aesthetic appearance for pickups due to a flush-mounted, concealed window opening. A patent-pending molded bulb seal provides a leak-resistant barrier and an excellent leak-proof water-management system. The development can be applied to other OEM pickups thanks to the efforts of:

System Supplier: Guardian Automotive Products  
Material Processor: Guardian Automotive  
Material Supplier: DuPont Automotive  
Resin: Rynite® 530 BK503 polyethylene terephthalate (PET)  
Tooling Supplier: not available

In the **Powertrain** category, the 2006 winner is the **COMBINED WIDEBAND TURBO RESONATOR** featured on the **'07 MY Chrysler Group Dodge Nitro SUV**. Turbo whine as well as blade-pass noise is no longer audible on vehicle interiors or exteriors due to this first-ever combination resonator mounted on the pressure side of the turbocharger. The in-line mounted, single-housing resonator provides wideband frequency attenuation. The combination of position and attenuation level saves about 60% in mass and materials vs. alternate methods of quieting turbocharged vehicles. Contributors to this innovation included:

System Supplier: Woco MAS USA Inc.  
Material Processor: Novoplas  
Material Supplier: DuPont Automotive  
Resin: Zytel® 70G33 33% glass-filled polyamide (PA (nylon)) 6.6  
Tooling Supplier: Novoplas

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4-4-4-4

In the ***Process / Assembly / Enabling Technologies*** category, the winning application for 2006 was the **FREE-FORM (2-SHOT) DOOR BOLSTER** featured on the **'07 MY Chrysler Group Dodge Caliber SUV**. This process combines a structural substrate (polypropylene) and a soft-feel outer surface (styrene-ethylene-butylene-styrene (SEBS) elastomer) in a single high-pressure molding operation. Creative surface designs that can intermix different colors, haptics, thicknesses, and textures are used to produce a single, more-cost-effective part while also providing the perception of a more expensive component. Cost savings of 10-20% and weight savings of 15% were realized. This innovation was made possible through the efforts of:

System Supplier: Lear Corporation

Material Processor: Lear Corporation - Greencastle

Material Supplier: Kraiburg

Resin: Thermolast K<sup>®</sup> HTP8679/33 polypropylene and styrene ethylene butylene styrene (SEBS (TPE-S)) elastomer

Tooling Supplier: Hi-Tech

The winner in the newest category in the ***Innovation Awards Competition – Safety***, added last year – was the **FULLY STRUCTURAL BLOW-MOLDED SEATBACKS** on the **'07 MY Audi AG Audi<sup>®</sup>TT roadster**. These all-plastic, blow-molded PC / ABS seatbacks meet strict European safety legislation, including ECE 17 luggage retention, as well as other globally mandated requirements. Because the PC / ABS blow-molded seatbacks replaced metal, a significant weight savings of almost 2.3 kg (5 lb) / vehicle was realized as well as a cost savings of \$4 USD / vehicle. The winning team included:

System Supplier: Lear Corporation

Material Processor: Moellertech GmbH

Material Supplier: Dow Automotive

Resin: PULSE<sup>™</sup> 2200 BG polycarbonate / acrylonitrile butadiene styrene (PC/ABS)

Tooling Supplier: not available

In the last nomination category – ***Hall of Fame***, for applications in continuous use for at least 15 years – the winner was the **THERMOPLASTIC FRONT GRILLE** on the **'66 MY General Motors Pontiac<sup>®</sup> Bonneville<sup>®</sup>, Catalina<sup>®</sup>, and Tempest<sup>®</sup> vehicles**. The front grilles on these 1966 Pontiac models were the first thermoplastic parts to be used on the exterior of automobiles. The material used was painted acrylonitrile butadiene styrene (ABS) supplied by the then Marbon Chemical Division of BorgWarner. The application was used across all models in the Pontiac Bonneville, Catalina, and Tempest vehicle lines, saving 6.4 - 8.2 kg (14 - 18 lb) per vehicle. (Actual part mass was 1.8 kg (4 lb).) In the words of Josh Madden, SPE Emeritus and then-design engineer at Pontiac, "This single step into the world of thermoplastics on automobiles was the harbinger of the myriad common parts we now take for granted. In fact, there isn't a car on the market today that doesn't have a plastic grille. That's why we selected it to be our 2006 ***Hall of Fame*** award winner." Key team members on that original launch included: Duane Miller (Pontiac Design Engineering), Josh Madden (Pontiac Materials Engineering), Bob Carroll (GM - Ternstedt), and Len Becker and Fred Garnham (Perfect Mold). Management support at GM came from Pete Estes, John DeLorean, Herman Kaiser, and Ken Valentine. Other key team members for this innovation included:

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*SPE Announces Winners of 36<sup>th</sup>-Annual Innovation Awards Competition*  
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System Supplier: Millington Plastics Co. (Upper Sandusky, Ohio) and GM Ternstedt Division (Syracuse, N.Y.)

Material Processor: Millington Plastics Co. and GM Ternstedt Division

Material Supplier: Marbon Chemical Division of BorgWarner (subsequently sold to GE Plastics)

Resin: CYCOLAC<sup>®</sup> H painted acrylonitrile butadiene styrene (ABS)

Tooling Supplier: Perfect Mold (later The Becker Group) and GM Ternstedt

*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 typically draws over 800 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 will 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](http://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](http://www.4spe.org), or call +1.203.775.0471.

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**TROY, (DETROIT) MICH.** – The 36<sup>th</sup>-annual **SPE® Automotive Innovation Awards Competition** winners have been announced and the nomination receiving the most votes in the **Body Interior** category was the **IN-LINE COMPOUNDED STRUCTURAL DUCT ASSEMBLY** featured on the '07 **MY Chrysler Group Dodge Nitro SUV**. This is the first application of in-line compounding / injection molding for a 2-piece, vibration-welded instrument panel structural-duct assembly. The thermoplastic polyolefin (TPO) IP retainer (base panel) is subsequently welded to the structural duct, which has a Class-A finish. Overall assembly cost savings due to materials usage (polypropylene (PP) vs. polycarbonate / acrylonitrile butadiene styrene (PC/ABS)) is approximately 15%.

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