



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: (6 August 2011)

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## PANEL EVALUATES TRENDS RESHAPING GLOBAL AUTO MARKET THROUGH 2016 AT SPE<sup>®</sup> AUTOMOTIVE TPO SHOW

**TROY, (DETROIT) MICH.** – This year's executive-management panel discussion at the thirteenth-annual **SPE<sup>®</sup> Automotive TPO Global Conference**, held **October 2-5, 2011**, will explore trends already reshaping the global automotive industry as it begins to recover from its 2008-2009 crash. The panel, whose topic is *On the Road Again Toward 2016*, will be held from **1:00-2:30 p.m.** on **Tuesday, October 4, 2011** at the Troy Marriott (Detroit suburbs), Mich., and will be led by moderators, Bob Eller, president of Robert Eller Associates LLC, and Ron Price, president of Global Polymer Solutions. Confirmed panelists include Leon Jacobs, Polypropylene (PP) global business director, SABIC Innovative Plastics and also a keynote speaker at the conference; Alan Gier, director-Global Risk Management & Insurance, General Motors Co.; George Halow, chief engineer-Cockpit/Trim, Ford Motor Co.; Rob Morgan, vice-president, Advanced Composites; and Brian Bradley, executive director-Product Engineering, Magna Exteriors & Interiors, Magna International Inc.

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*Panel Discussion Evaluates Trends Reshaping the Global Automotive Market*  
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“Over the last decade, engineered polyolefins and thermoplastic polyolefins (TPOs) have been the fastest growth polymers in the automotive industry,” says Ron Price, co-moderator of the panel discussion. “And for 13 years, the SPE Automotive TPO Conference has provided a dynamic forum to communicate leading-edge technology and trends developing at the automotive and polyolefins interface. To help our industry understand the shifting landscape, our panelists will look forward and share their views on how the automotive industry will change, grow, and build cars that must achieve huge strides in fuel economy and sustainability, while also responding to global supply-chain issues and demand shifts. As such, our annual Auto-TPO panel discussion provides an important opportunity for OEMs and leading tier suppliers to express their views, challenge the supply base, and provide leadership.

Adds co-moderator, Robert Eller, “Presentations given by panelists and questions asked by moderators are intended to address the critical issues our industry faces during the next 5-10 years related to meeting significantly tougher fuel-economy standards, sustainability goals, global materials sourcing, shifts in fleet composition, the evolution of truly global platforms, and global OEM approvals. We expect polyolefin polymers will continue to play an important role in addressing many of the critical issues the automotive industry faces, including dynamic energy sourcing, cost reduction, supply-chain management, and increasing quality goals.”

### **About the Automotive TPO Global Conference**

Since 1998, the ***SPE Automotive TPO Global 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. Throughout that time, polyolefins have been the fastest-growing segment of the global plastics industry owing to their excellent cost / performance ratio. The show typically draws over 400 attendees from 20 countries on four continents who are interested in learning about the latest in rigid and elastomeric thermoplastic polyolefin (TPO) as well as thermoplastic elastomer (TPE) and thermoplastic vulcanizate (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 representing materials or reinforcement suppliers, equipment OEMs, industry consultants, media, and members of academia. As such, the event offers attendees a rich environment in which to network and explore the latest developments in materials, processing, and applications for these versatile families of thermoplastic resins.

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*Panel Discussion Evaluates Trends Reshaping the Global Automotive Market*  
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Traditional technical sessions on *Materials Development*, *Polypropylene Compounds*, *Applications Development*, and *Surface Enhancements* are planned for this year's program, as well as new sessions on *TPO / TPE Interfaces* and *Polyolefin Foams & Advances in Olefin Processes*. A venue changed to the Detroit-Marriott-Troy hotel (<http://www.marriott.com/hotels/travel/dtttt-detroit-marriott-troy/?clusterCode=MW1>) has been made for the 2011 conference. A variety of sponsorship packages are available for companies interested in showcasing their products and / or services.

### **About SPE®**

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 composites developments – particularly in the automotive industry. Topic areas include applications, materials, processing, equipment, tooling, design, and development.

For more information about the *SPE Automotive TPO Global 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 contact 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 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.** – Leon Jacobs, Polypropylene (PP) global business director, SABIC Innovative Plastics (<http://www.sabicautomotive.com>), a strategic business unit of Saudi Basic Industries Corporation (SABIC) will participate on the executive management panel discussion at this year's **SPE® Automotive TPO Global Conference**. In his current role, which he has held since June 2009, Jacobs is responsible for running SABIC's existing polypropylene automotive business in Europe, and expanding these activities in other regions. Prior to this assignment, Jacobs held leadership positions as general manager of the STAMAX® and PP-copolymer businesses of SABIC, and was general manager of the European sales office for large and international accounts. He began his career in 1986 as an analytical chemist at DSM and has since held various commercial roles in marketing, sales, and product management. He became part of the SABIC organization when DSM's petrochemicals operations were acquired by SABIC in 2002. He holds an MBA in Marketing and Finance from the University of Diepenbeek in Belgium.

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**TROY, (DETROIT) MICH.** – Alan G. Gier, director of Global Risk Management & Insurance at General Motors Co. (GM) and president and chair of General International Limited, GM's captive insurance company, is another member of this year's executive-management panel discussion at the ***SPE® Automotive TPO Global Conference***. Gier assumed responsibility for GM's then risk-management activities in 2009 in addition to his role as director-Global Risk Financing & Insurance. Prior to this role, he held various management positions in strategic planning, business planning, international joint-venture operations, purchasing, and logistics & finance. Gier joined GM in 1978 with the Chevrolet Division where he held several positions in finance and audit. A graduate of Michigan State University and Wayne State University, he is a member of the National Risk and Insurance Management Society (RIMS) and the Manufacturers Alliance (MAPI); a board member of the Detroit Chapter of RIMS and General International Limited (Bermuda and Washington, D.C.); and an advisory board member for Institutional Investor, the ACE Group of Companies, and Chartis Insurance.

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**TROY, (DETROIT) MICH.** – This year's executive-management panel discussion at the thirteenth-annual ***SPE® Automotive TPO Global Conference***, on **October 4** will explore trends already reshaping the global automotive industry as it begins to recover from its 2008-2009 crash. One member of the panel is George Halow, chief engineer-Cockpit/Trim, Ford Motor Co., who has global responsibility for engineering, signoff, and launch, as well as technology development for the automaker's instrument panels, consoles, door trim, and hard & soft interior trim. Halow has 24 years of wide-ranging experience at Ford, including design & release engineering (for both Body Interior and Body Exterior), Instrument Panel/Injection Mold manufacturing and assembly, Business & Product Strategy, and Advanced Technology Development. He also has served as chief program engineer for the *Expedition & Navigator* SUVs, *Crown Victoria/Grand Marquis/Town Car* luxury sedans, and *Ranger* pickup vehicle lines. Halow is a co-owner of a U.S. and German patent for remote vehicle diagnostics and prognostics data acquisition and processing. He holds a Bachelor's degree in Aerospace Engineering from the University of Maryland, a Master's degree in Mechanical Engineering from Cornell University, and an MBA from INSEAD in Fontainebleau, France.

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**TROY, (DETROIT) MICH.** – Rob L. Morgan, vice-president, Advanced Composites will be a member of the **SPE® Automotive TPO Global Conference** executive-management panel discussion on **October 4, 2011**. He has responsibility for all commercial activities at Advanced Composites, a dedicated polypropylene compounder for the automotive industry with three production facilities in North America and with majority ownership held by Mitsui Chemical. Morgan joined the company in 1994 and has since held several positions within sales and marketing, including Business Development, Sales Management, and eventually becoming vice-president in 2006. In 2009 his responsibilities were expanded to include all purchasing activities as well. Previously he held positions in sales, business development, and marketing with Monsanto Co. and General Electric Co. Morgan holds a BBA degree from the University of Cincinnati.

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**TROY, (DETROIT) MICH.** – Brian Bradley, executive director-Product Engineering for Magna Exteriors and Interiors, is a participant on the executive management panel discussion that will be held at this year's SPE® **Automotive TPO Global Conference** on **October 4, 2011**. In his current role, which he has held since 2005, Bradley is responsible for overseeing production design and engineering, plus materials specification support for OEM programs at all customers serviced by Magna's Interiors Group. Previously, Bradley held positions as integration director and program manager for Magna Interiors (formerly called Intier Interiors). Before joining Magna International Inc., he worked at Chrysler Corp., Ford Motor Co., and Ashland Chemical Co. A graduate of Wayne State University with a B.S. degree in Chemical Engineering, Bradley is also a licensed Michigan Professional Engineer.

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