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SPE[®] ACCE ISSUES CALL FOR GRADUATE-LEVEL SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATIONS FOR RESEARCH IN AUTOMOTIVE COMPOSITES

TROY (DETROIT), MICH. – The organizing committee for the **SPE Automotive Composites Conference & Exhibition (SPE ACCE)** announced today that it will again bestow two \$2,000 USD scholarships for graduate-level research in polymer composites that has impact on ground transportation, particularly in the automotive industry. Students interested in applying will find a scholarship application form available for downloading at <http://speautomotive.com/comp.htm>; applications should be submitted electronically to ACCEpapers@speautomotive.com by **July 1, 2012** for awards to be announced in August. The scholarships are funded by proceeds from previous SPE ACCE conferences and donations made by the SPE Composites and Automotive Divisions, which jointly organize the conference.

Winners will be selected from the pool of qualified applicants by SPE ACCE committee members. Winning students will be required to report on the results of their findings during the thirteenth-annual SPE ACCE, which takes place September 10-12, 2013. This is the sixth year conference organizers have offered these graduate-level scholarships to fund transportation composites research.

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SPE Accepting Automotive Composites Scholarship Applications
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Last year's SPE ACCE Scholarship Award winners were **David Inglefield**, a Ph.D. candidate pursuing a dual degree in Chemistry and Biomedical Engineering at *Virginia Polytechnic Institute & State University* for work involving the synthesis of functionalized carbon nanotubes for optimized properties in polymer composites; and **Thomas (Tom) G. Loken**, a doctoral candidate in Mechanical Engineering at University of Wisconsin-Madison as well as a project engineer at The Madison Group for a project analyzing the effects of processing conditions on fiber-length distribution in short-fiber composites. Both Inglefield and Loken will present the results of their work at this year's SPE ACCE, September 11-13, 2012.

The 2010 winners were **Benjamin Hangs**, then a doctoral candidate at the *Fraunhofer Institute of Chemical Technology* for work on Integration of Features into Parts made from Thermoplastic Unidirectional Tape—Overview & Case Study; and **Francesco Deleo**, then a doctoral student at the *University of Washington* on Crashworthiness Energy Absorption of Carbon Fiber Composites: Experiment & Simulation – a report that also won a conference *Best Paper Award*.

The 2009 awards were presented to **Gregorio Manuel Vélez-García**, then a Ph.D. candidate at *Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University*, whose work focused on Development of a New Method for Predicting Fiber Orientation in Fiber-Reinforced Injection-Molded Thermoplastics, and to **Zeba Farheen Abdul Samad Parkar**, then a doctoral candidate at the *University of Illinois-Urbana/Champaign* whose research topic was Novel Aromatic Thermosetting Copolyester (ATCP) / Carbon Fiber Composites.

In 2008, the winners were **Uday Sharma** of University of Michigan-Dearborn, whose topic was Analysis of Thermoplastic Woven Composites at High-Strain Rates, and **Tobias Potyra** of *Fraunhofer Institute of Chemical Technology*, who worked on New Direct Processing Technology for the Manufacture of SMC Parts (Direct-SMC).

The first scholarships were given in 2007 in honor of journalist and composites-industry insider, Steve Loud who passed away in 2006. The recipients were **Roston Elwell** from *Texas A&M University* for research on the Use of Active-Core Composite Sandwich Panels for Improved Automotive Safety; and **Alejandro Londono-Hurtado** from *University of Wisconsin-Madison*, whose work involved Simulation and Numerical Modeling of Fiber Orientation and Density Distribution During Molding of Fiber-Reinforced Automotive Parts.

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Held annually in suburban Detroit, the ACCE draws about 500 speakers, exhibitors, sponsors, and attendees and provides an environment dedicated solely to discussion and networking about advances in the transportation composites. Its global appeal is evident in the diversity of exhibitors, speakers, and attendees who come to the conference from Europe, the Middle East, Africa, and Asia / Pacific as well as North America. Fully one-third of attendees indicate they work for automotive, light truck, agriculture, truck & bus, heavy truck, or aviation OEM, and another 25% represent tier suppliers. Attendees also represent composite materials, processing equipment, additives, or reinforcement suppliers; trade associations, consultants, university and government labs; media; and investment bankers. The show has been jointly sponsored by the SPE Automotive and Composites Divisions since 2001.

The mission of SPE is to promote scientific and engineering knowledge relating to plastics. SPE's Automotive and Composites Divisions work to advance plastics and plastic-based composites technologies worldwide and to educate industry, academia, and the public about these advances. Both divisions are dedicated to educating, promoting, recognizing, and communicating technical accomplishments for all phases of plastics and plastic-based composite developments, including materials, processing, equipment, tooling, design and testing, and application development.

For more information about the SPE Automotive Composites Conference, visit the Automotive Division's website at <http://speautomotive.com/comp.htm>, or the Composites' Division website at <http://compositeshelp.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 or other SPE events, visit the SPE website at www.4spe.org, or call +1.203.775.0471.

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