

WELCOME

TO THE 2009 INNOVATION AWARDS GALA

November 12, 2009



Welcome to the 39th-annual SPE Automotive Innovation Awards Gala, sponsored by the Automotive Division of the Society of Plastics Engineers International. I am honored to once again chair this program, the world's oldest and largest recognition event in the automotive and plastics industries.

When we began planning this year's competition, we were concerned about how many nominations we'd actually receive given four consecutive years of downward global automotive sales, continual reductions in engineering staff at many OEMs, and the global economic crisis. However, despite this being one of the most challenging years on record for the global automotive industry, we are extremely pleased to find that we received the same number of nominations as last year – just over 50 in total. What is even more exciting is the international nature of this year's competition. We received nominations on commercial vehicles produced on four different continents – North America, Europe, Asia, and Australia. Therefore, our tradition of honoring the people, parts, and plastics innovations on automobiles and ground transportation continues and this year's nominations are great examples of why plastics are still THE material of choice everywhere in the world.

Tonight's program will recognize accomplishments in specific vehicle categories and highlight select individuals with executive awards that include the following:

- Body Exterior
- Body Interior
- Chassis & Hardware
- Lifetime Achievement Award
- Materials
- Environmental
- Vehicle Engineering Team Award
- Performance & Customization
- Safety
- Hall of Fame
- Past-Chair Award (SPE Automotive Division)
- Process, Assembly & Enabling Technologies
- Powertrain, and
- The Grand Award

Before we begin the show, though, I would like to thank the many volunteers, sponsors, and judges who made this event possible. Their dedication and commitment enable the SPE Automotive Division to recognize the industry's most significant innovations, many of which are only made possible with polymeric materials.

Again, welcome, thanks for coming and enjoy the show!

Maria Ciliberti

Maria Ciliberti
'08-'09 SPE Automotive Innovation Awards Program Chair
Chair, SPE Automotive Division
Ticona Engineering Polymers