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# Global Perspectives

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May/June 2008

*News From The Global Automotive Aftermarket Symposium*

## With 435 Industry Leaders In Attendance, 2008 Symposium Enjoys A Record Turnout

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A record crowd of 435 industry leaders attended the 2008 Global Automotive Aftermarket Symposium (GAAS) on Tuesday, May 20 and Wednesday, May 21 at the Hyatt Regency O'Hare in Chicago. Over 30 speakers and panelists provided attendees with information and insights surrounding the theme of "Shift Forward."

"In a difficult economy, we were pleased to see so many attend this year's Symposium from both North America and across the globe," said Dave Caracci, GAAS chairman. "And the feedback we received about the content of this year's event was overwhelmingly positive."

Enjoy this edition of *Global Perspectives*, as we look back at this year's event. The 2009 Symposium is scheduled for Wednesday, May 6 and Thursday, May 7 at the Hyatt Regency O'Hare in Chicago. ♦



*GAAS Chairman Dave Caracci provides opening greetings at the 2008 Symposium*

## Symposium Awards Scholarships to 115 Students

The Global Automotive Aftermarket Symposium (GAAS) Scholarship Committee recently announced the awarding of scholarships to 115 students pursuing aftermarket careers in 2008.

The \$1,000 and \$2,000 scholarships will be granted to 105 students in the U.S. and ten in Canada. In the history of the scholarship program, more than 1,400 students have received aid totaling approximately \$1.4 million.

"GAAS continues to ensure a strong future talent pool for automotive aftermarket companies and service outlets through the work of the Scholarship Committee and the support of the Symposium," said Pete Kornafel, chairman, GAAS Scholarship Committee. "This year the quality of applicants and their dedication to automotive careers has been exceptional. We are pleased to have the opportunity to help these well-qualified, deserving students reach their goal of pursuing a career in the automotive aftermarket," he added.



*GAAS Scholarship Chairman Pete Kornafel announces the 2008 Symposium scholarship awards.*

The GAAS scholarships are funded through proceeds from the Global Automotive Aftermarket Symposium. This year's 115 scholarships include those funded through the donations and grants from:

- Art Fisher Memorial Scholarship Fund
- Automotive Communications Council Scholarships (ACC)
- ASC Industries Inc.
- ASE / Michael Busch Memorial Scholarships
- Breslow Foundation Scholarships

*(Continued on page 3)*

## Polk Presents Inventory Efficiency Awards for 2008

**R**. L. Polk & Co., the recognized leader in data-driven solutions and automotive aftermarket intelligence, presented the 2008 Polk Inventory Efficiency Awards during the 2008 Symposium. The Polk Inventory Efficiency Award recognizes and rewards outstanding aftermarket companies for process improvements relative to inventory efficiency.

Awards were presented for excellence in two categories: Retailer / Distributor and Manufacturer.

In the Manufacturer category, Hastings Manufacturing Company, LLC, based in Hastings, Mich. was recognized for creating a real-time, state-of-the-art fulfillment process utilizing bar code scanning technology and custom programming. Hastings was able to recognize significant increases in profits and inventory efficiency, as well as declines in shipping errors and returns. The award

was accepted by Fred Cook Jr., chief executive officer and president of Hastings Manufacturing, LLC.

In the Retailer / Distributor category, Portland, Maine-based VIP Parts, Tires & Service received the award for implementing advanced technology to utilize an existing enterprise resource planning (ERP) system to provide seamless, next-day delivery on most special orders. This project resulted in increased customer service levels and inventory efficiency by allowing VIP to stock parts as “warehouse-only” while fulfilling customer requests in a timely manner. Dan Grosz, vice president of information systems, VIP Parts, Tires & Service accepted the award on the company’s behalf.

The awards were presented by Mark Seng, vice president of Strategic Markets and Stephen Polk, chairman, president and CEO of R. L. Polk & Co.

“The Polk Inventory Efficiency Award was created to help the industry recognize companies that are proactively addressing a serious issue, inventory management. The award, along with the presentation at GAAS, gives companies a venue to tell their success story and celebrate the opportunity to be



*Dan Grosz (center) of VIP Parts, Tires & Service accepted the Polk Inventory Efficiency award in the Retailer / Distributor category from R.L. Polk’s Stephen Polk (right) and Mark Seng (left).*

acknowledged,” said Seng.

“Both of these projects should be considered as best practices in the industry for implementing technology efficiently and effectively to manage inventory and costs. Hastings and VIP should be congratulated for the impact their efforts have made on not just their respective companies, but on the automotive aftermarket in general.”

In addition to receiving the Polk Inventory Efficiency Award, both companies received the honor of having a \$1,000 donation given in their name by Polk to the Global Aftermarket Scholarship fund which assists students who are looking to begin their career in the aftermarket. ♦



*Fred Cook Jr. (center) of Hastings Manufacturing, LLC accepted the Polk Inventory Efficiency award in the Manufacturer category from R.L. Polk’s Stephen Polk (right) and Mark Seng (left).*

### Global Automotive Aftermarket Symposium

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## Notable Quotes From The 2008 Symposium In Chicago

*“In China we say, all things are possible, but nothing’s easy. But being creative, being proactive, thinking out of the box can yield real fruits.”*

-- Steve Ganster, Technomic Asia, from his presentation “Developments in China’s Aftermarket”

*“The automobile will be at the epicenter of demographic changes, public policy challenges and product and process innovations. The suppliers and the OEMs will have tremendous challenges and opportunities. But we need to improve the return on capital to have the wherewithal for us to succeed. Because without being able to get the capital, many companies will not be able to implement the kind of steps and actions that are necessary to be competitive.”*

-- Neil De Koker, OESA, from his presentation “The Shifting OE Scene from Detroit to Tokyo, to Shanghai, to New Delhi”

*“The winners in the computer market have been the people who have been able to harness the power of open source programming, providing access to your source codes so many people can program new applications for your equipment. And I think telematics is likely to go the same way.”*

-- Kathleen Schmatz, AAIA, from her presentation “Telematics: The Challenges, Opportunities and Threats”

*“...The service dealer is looking for some reassurance that the product that they’ve depended on for years and years and years, they can continue to have the same level of confidence in. We know that the demand for fit, form and function is more pronounced today than it’s ever been. And they want to know if, in fact, the product that’s being sourced meets that criteria.”*

-- Steve Handschuh, AASA, from the presentation “Let’s Talk: Promoting Dialogue Among Suppliers and Technicians”

*“What we’re hearing from our shop owners today is that brand is less important than availability and service. The key word and the compelling reason for an installer, professional installer, to support a WD today is the availability of the parts and the speed of service that they’re able to provide. One comment is that the decision makers in our industry today at the professional installer level are not your granddaddy’s installers.”*

-- Fred Myers, One Stop Undercar, from the presentation “Decision Makers - What Drives Today’s Independent Repair Shop to Choose One Parts Source Over Another?”

*“People, people, people. It’s all about people. And I don’t care what business you’re in. If you’ve got good people with you, you’ll be fine. If you don’t, you’re done. It’s as simple as that.”*

-- Doug Reevey, Autotec, from the presentation “Family Affair”

## Symposium Awards Scholarships to 115 Students (continued)

*(Continued from page 1)*

- Leadership Development Network of AAIA (LDN)
- R.L. Polk & Co.
- Udell Family Charitable Foundation
- University of the Aftermarket Foundation
- Zurich

“This year we are pleased to say we have grown closer to our goal of becoming a ‘one stop shop’ for students seeking automotive scholarships through increased collaboration with other automotive and aftermarket groups,” Kornafel said. “By working together, we are benefiting the students who can submit one application and be considered for multiple scholarships,” he added.

Collaborative efforts with state associations and other automotive groups include:

- Automotive Aftermarket Association of the Carolinas and Tennessee (AAACT)

- Automotive Aftermarket Association Southeast (AAAS)
- Association of Diesel Specialists (ADS)
- Automotive Parts & Services Association (APSA)
- Automotive Parts and Service Association of Illinois (APSA of IL)
- Arizona/California/Nevada Automotive Wholesaler’s Association (CAWA)
- Ohio Valley Automotive Aftermarket Association (OVAAA)

Each of these other collaborating groups has their own criteria and selects their own recipients for their scholarships. “Only two of the other groups have made their selections, and we’ve already identified five students who have received more than one scholarship from their one application,” Kornafel said.

To be eligible for a GAAS scholarship, applicants must be enrolled full-time in a college-level program or an ASE/NATEF (National Automotive Technician Education Foundation) certified automotive tech-

nical program. Graduate programs and part-time undergraduate programs do not qualify.

The GAAS scholarship also is unique in that recipients who graduate from their program and show proof of employment as technicians in the automotive aftermarket for at least six months after graduation can receive a second matching grant.

GAAS Scholarship applications for 2009 will be available online at [www.automotivescholarships.com](http://www.automotivescholarships.com) beginning in September 2008. The deadline for submitting 2009 scholarship applications is March 31, 2009.

The annual investment to help develop future aftermarket industry leaders is primarily funded through proceeds from the annual Global Automotive Aftermarket Symposium. Additional scholarship funding comes from industry contributions from individuals, companies and foundations. Contributions can be made to the GAAS Scholarship Fund, c/o Susan Medick at AAIA, at 301-654-6664, or [susan.medick@aftermarket.org](mailto:susan.medick@aftermarket.org). ♦

## The 2008 Symposium In Pictures



*William Strauss of the Chicago Federal Reserve Bank provided his view of today's economy and the outlook for 2008 and beyond.*



*Tony Cristello, BB&T Capital Markets, provided an aftermarket perspective on Wall Street.*



*Fotios Katsardis, Temot International Autoparts, updates the European aftermarket.*



*Steve Hoellein of Felt Auto Parts receives the 2008 Mort Schwartz Excellence in Education Award from AAIA President and CEO, Kathleen Schmatz.*



*Mike Hanley, Ernst & Young on "Mega Trends Facing the Global Automotive Industry."*



*AutoZone's Ray Pohlman and former legislator Leslie Waters, exhort aftermarket executives to get involved in government affairs.*



*GAAS Founder and Chairman Emeritus, Mort Schwartz, dons his beloved Cubs cap.*



*Bruce Merrifield (left) and Bill Wade discuss the merits of private label vs. branded products.*



*Brian Cruickshank (left), Director of the University of the Aftermarket at Northwood University, introduces "Team Envision," the winning team from the organization's Leadership 2.0 program.*



*Neil De Koker of OESA on the global automotive industry.*



*Panelists discuss what drives repair shops to choose one part source over another.*