



Global Perspectives

Connecting you to the industry's leading educational event.

September/October 2005

News From The Global Automotive Aftermarket Symposium

"Thriving in a World of Change" Is Theme for 2006 Symposium

Inside this issue:

Thriving In a World of Change Is Theme for 2006 Symposium 1

Polk Renews Sponsorship of GAAS 1

John Passante To Provide Insights On Leadership 2

Symposium Scholarships Will Be Available Online 3



Another strong turnout is expected when GAAS returns to the Detroit area in May 2006.

Thriving in a World of Change is the theme for the 2006 Global Automotive Aftermarket Symposium (GAAS). GAAS 2006 will be held Wednesday, May 17 and Thursday, May 18, 2006 at the Hyatt Regency, Dearborn, Mich. The 2006 Symposium is already beginning to take shape. Here are the speakers and presentations already confirmed:

- **W. Michael Cox**, Ph.D., senior vice president and chief economist of the Federal Reserve Bank of Dallas. Cox will present a global economic perspective. He is widely recognized for his Pulitzer Prize-nominated book, *Myths of Rich and Poor*.
- **Cynthia R. Cohen**, founder and president, Strategic Mindshare. Known as the "Strategy Diva," her presentation is titled: "From 2 Wheels to 4 Wheels at Break Neck Speed...What's Ahead from the Next Generation of Customers."
- **Manufacturing Issues** a panel discussion moderated by Bob McKenna, president, MEMA and featuring: Mike Howarth, senior vice president, KYB America LLC; Francisco A. (Frank) Ordoñez, vice president of Delphi Corporation and president of Delphi Product & Service Solutions; Al Stecklein, president of Gates Worldwide Aftermarket Division, and Gordon Ulsh, president and CEO, Exide Technologies.
- **John Passante**, president and CEO, The Organizational Development Group. John is a frequent presenter for the University of the Aftermarket and will be discussing leadership and management issues.
- **"Who Will Fix The Cars?"** a panel discussion of service dealers. Moderated by Ron Pyle, president, ASA, panelists will include: Lynn Beckwith, Beckwith's Automotive, Humble, Texas; Aaron Clements, C & C Automotive, Augusta, Ga.; John Cochrane, Cochrane Automotive, Toronto, Ontario, Canada, and Denny Kahler, Kahler's Werkstatt, Dublin, Calif.
- **Dennis Welvaert**, president, North American Aftermarket Division, of Dayco Products, LLC, a division of Mark IV Industries, will present "A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to GAAS." A 34-year veteran of the automotive industry, Welvaert will share how he came to realize that suc-

(Continued on page 2)

Polk Renews Sponsorship of GAAS



R. L. Polk & Co. has agreed to extend its corporate sponsorship of the Global Automotive Aftermarket Symposium (GAAS) for the next three years. The 2006 event is set for Wednesday and Thursday, May 17-18, at the Hyatt Regency in Dearborn, MI.

"We are pleased to have Polk's support for GAAS," said Mort Schwartz, GAAS chairman. "Our two-day symposium has a greater purpose. All of the net proceeds from the event go toward funding industry scholarships. Last year, we marked a significant milestone when the Symposium surpassed \$1 million in scholarship funds awarded to more than 1,000 students.

"All of us at Polk are proud to continue our sponsorship of GAAS and be a part of helping develop the next generation of leadership in the aftermarket industry," said Mike Gingell, vice president strategic markets, R. L. Polk & Co.

Polk also will present its Aftermarket Inventory Efficiency Award during the 2006 event. Designed to recognize and reward outstanding aftermarket companies for process improvements relative to inventory efficiency, the award was initiated at the 2005 GAAS. ♦

John Passante To Provide Insights On Leadership

John A. Passante has a keen passion and interest in leadership and brings over 30 years of automotive aftermarket experience to bear upon the subject. Passante has been involved in all areas of the aftermarket from manufacturing, distribution, sales and marketing and human resources and administration. As president and CEO, The Organizational Development Group, Passante is in frequent demand as an executive coach, recruiter and presenter. He is an adjunct faculty member for the University of the Aftermarket.

Passante's GAAS presentation will be held on Wednesday, May 17. Here's an interview we recently conducted with him on the topic of leadership.

Q. Why is leadership so important in an organization?

The significance of leadership is it sets the tone at the top, it establishes the culture, and people mirror the tone at the top. In other words, the behavior, the style, the value systems, the methods, the communications, the trust factor that the leaders either engender or don't engender impacts performance, motivation, and self esteem.

It's interesting to me, people say: "You know, Passante, you deal with the soft side of the business. Sales, marketing, distribution, manufacturing that's the hard side of the business. The people side is the soft side." I take umbrage to that, because I think the people side is the most difficult side, given the complexity of human nature.

When I do my seminars, I say the most important thing to evaluate in a person's life is how they impact another human

being. That's what leadership is all about. The influence, the impact, and granting people an opportunity to use their God-given talents. And that's not just nice things to say, I think it is very pragmatic because employees are really a company's competitive edge.



John Passante

What are the characteristics of a strong and effective leader?

First of all, I think a leader has to have intellect. That doesn't mean they have to be a Rhodes scholar but they need to be able to distinguish between concepts, make decisions and be decisive. I think a leader has to have character. Character is part and parcel to integrity. Along with commitment, they have to have compassion.

Leaders should be open to change and a champion of change. Everyday when they arrive at the workplace, even when they are in the shower in the morning, they should be thinking about: "How can I influence people today to make changes that will make the company better." It is the never ending quest for continuous improvement.

I think leaders need to be strategic. I think they have to see the big picture. And I think leaders need to be human. Leaders have to have enough conviction to admit when they're wrong and say that either publicly or privately and not hide behind

title or power.

I also believe leaders should have passion. If you don't have passion for what you do, if you don't have passion for life, for the people you touch everyday I think you are missing an awful lot.

What are employees expecting today? Is there a value proposition they are looking for?

It's interesting because at this point in my life I talk to a lot of people who are a lot younger than me and they have a whole different perspective than I did when I started in the workforce over 40 years ago. Today's employees are looking for challenge, an opportunity to use their education and they are motivated by learning. They want to make a contribution and be rewarded.

Loyalty is lacking today only because of some of the acquisitions and integration that has taken place where people have been hurt. I think they are looking for us to somehow paint a picture that they can have a longer term career, although we can't guarantee lifelong employment anymore. Not that we could in the past either. Employees are looking for career development, and not necessarily that they have to move up higher because sometimes they can move laterally. So they can hone their skills should their company be acquired and they have to seek employment elsewhere. It helps fill their toolbox with the skills and talents that would be desirable to another employer.

Employees today like candor; they want to know the truth and the strategy of the company. With computers there are no

(Continued on page 3)

Thriving In A World of Change (continued)

(Continued from page 1)

Successful e-business implementation can make significant differences to companies that take the time to do them right.

- **"Who Needs Marketing?"** a panel discussion of automotive aftermarket experts on effective collaboration on marketing programs. Moderated by Tom Marx, president and CEO, The Marx Group with panelists: Steve Marks, senior vice president of marketing and advertising, Aftermarket Auto Parts Alliance; Lisa Kranc, senior vice president of marketing, AutoZone, and Mario Recchia, vice president of marketing and business development, WorldPac.
- **Industry Leaders Panel**, featuring moderator, Kathleen Schmatz, and panelists: Jacques Landreville, president and CEO, Uni-Select; Dick Morgan, president and CEO, Aftermarket Auto Parts Alliance, and others to be confirmed.

In addition, GAAS 2006 will also feature a Wall Street presentation by a leading analyst.

Be sure to visit the Symposium website at: www.globalsymposium.org for a current list of speakers and an updated agenda. ♦

Symposium Scholarship Applications Will Be Available Online

This year the Global Automotive Aftermarket Symposium is making it easier for students to apply for scholarships. Beginning November 1, 2005 all scholarship application forms can be completed online.

Moving the scholarship application process online is being done in conjunction with an overall redesign of the GAAS Scholarship website (www.automotivescholarships.com) that is currently underway. The redesign will make the site easier to navigate and more content is being made available to students. Additionally, information resources for members of the automotive aftermarket, automotive instructors, counselors,



parents and the media will be made available.

Since the program started in 1997, the GAAS Scholarship Program has awarded scholarships to over 1,000 students representing over \$1 million in aid granted. Qualified applicants must either be a graduating high school senior or have

graduated from high school within the past two years (2004 or after). A complete list of scholarship qualifications can be found at the scholarship website.

Applications for the 2006 program must be received by March 31, 2006. A separate application for Canadian students is available from the Automotive Industries Association (AIA) of Canada at 613-728-5821, or at their organization's Web site: www.aiacanada.com.

The annual investment to help develop future aftermarket industry leaders is funded through proceeds from the annual Global Automotive Aftermarket Symposium and other contributions. ♦

Insights on Leadership (continued)

(Continued from page 2)

secrets anymore. What was confidential in the past, is probably no longer confidential today. So they want to know the strategy, they want to know the objectives. And they want to know what role they play in influencing that.

Who's going to manage the business in the future?

There's such an emphasis today on doing more with less to contain costs. I certainly acknowledge that and those are valid concerns if you are running an enterprise. Organizations in the aftermarket regularly take inventory so they know what their assets are. I would say that we need that same mindset vis-à-vis our people. You ought to have a process in place to say: "Let's assess: Who are our stars, at any level of the organization? Who are the steady Eddy's or steady Sally's who are always there, always do a good job and we never have to worry about them? Who are the other third that are not measuring up? It could be a combination of factors: a misplaced person not hired in the right role, a lack of training, an attitude problem. Whatever the case may be, they probably need to transfer positions." The

human resource, the human capital is the most expensive cost that an organization in the automotive aftermarket has today.

First of all I would do an assessment. I would make an impassioned plea to leaders in the automotive aftermarket to spend

"The human capital is the most expensive resource in the automotive aftermarket today."

John A. Passante

time with their key executives behind close doors talking about: "Who are the people that are going to take us to the next hurdle in the career of our organization? How do we get them ready? How do we cross-train them? How do we reward them? How do we retain them?"

I am a strong supporter of mentorship, because it really benefited my career. So whether you formalize a mentorship program or you have an informal program, every employee deserves someone who

takes a sincere, 24/7 interest in them and teaches them the business. And lets them benefit from the experiences they have had.

I think the talent is out there in the various companies. I think we have to identify it, although I'm not sure that we have. Once we identify it, we have to do something with it. It has to be in the DNA of the company. It can't be a once a year performance appraisal because it's required to give a salary increase. Usually what happens is the manager ticks that off their list and then goes on to the next business issue. It's got to be something you live and breathe; it's got to be in the culture.

I would also say our industry needs to do a better job of recruiting minorities.

Any closing thoughts on the subject of leadership?

One of my favorite sayings that I impart when I do a workshop or seminar is: "In the final analysis, people are the answer."

That's the capstone of what John Passante tries to bring to the party. If nothing else I want people to leave with that kind of feeling. ♦

Global Automotive Aftermarket Symposium

7101 Wisconsin Ave., Suite 1300

Bethesda, MD 20814-3415

Phone: 301-654-6664 • Fax: 301-654-3299 • Web: www.globalsymposium.org

Global Perspectives is published by the Global Automotive Aftermarket Symposium © 2005. All rights reserved.