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Panelists to Discuss ‘Shift Forward’ At 2008 Global Automotive Aftermarket Symposium

Research Triangle Park, N.C. – Panels featuring aftermarket industry veterans and experts will discuss a wide range of topics focusing on the conference theme of “Shift Forward” at the 2008 Global Automotive Aftermarket Symposium (GAAS) on Tuesday, May 20, and Wednesday, May 21, at the Hyatt Regency O’Hare in Chicago, Ill.

“Let’s Know Them Before We Need Them,” moderated by Ray Pohlman, vice president government relations, AutoZone, and featuring panelists Leslie Waters, former legislator, Florida House of Representatives and Randel K. Johnson, vice president, Labor, Immigration and Employee Benefits, U.S. Chamber of Commerce. The panel will examine the importance of government affairs and political action as a part of a company’s annual business planning.

“Decision Makers – What Drives Today’s Independent Repair Shop Owner to Choose One Parts Source Over Another?,” moderated by Gary Molinaro, editor/publisher, The Greensheet / Automotive Week, will focus on how the shop owner of today has changed from the shop owner of the past, especially in regard to sourcing parts.

Panelists include:

- Jim Bastone, owner, Bastone Auto Service;
- Scott Bennett, director of operations, Bennett Auto Supply; and
- Fred Myers, president, One Stop Undercar.

The **“Family Affair”** panel, moderated by John Washbish, president, CRM and Under Vehicle Group, Affinia Group, will look at how family owned/operated businesses have retained the legacy of their family business, while bringing new ideas to help accelerate their company forward and overcoming the challenges associated with rapid growth in a global economy.

Panelists include:

- Craig Bond, senior vice president, Bond Auto Parts (3rd generation, WD/jobber);
- Dominic Grote, vice president, sales and marketing, Grote Industries (4th generation, manufacturer); and
- Doug Reevey, president, Autotec (2nd generation, technician).

“Private Equity and The Aftermarket Panel,” moderated by Dan Smith, founder and president, Capstone Financial Group, will discuss the possibility of merger and acquisition activity continuing in the near and long term, and the role margin pressure will play in driving transactions.

Panelists include:

- Bodil Arlander, senior managing director, Bear Stearns Merchant Banking;
- Kristin Newhall, partner, The Riverside Company; and
- Jeremy Thompson, partner, ONCAP.

About GAAS

The GAAS program is a joint professional education effort of the Alliance of State Automotive Aftermarket Associations (ASAAA), Automotive Aftermarket Industry Association (AAIA), Automotive Aftermarket Suppliers Association (AASA), Automotive Industries Association (AIA) of Canada, Automotive Parts Rebuilders Association (APRA), Automotive Service Association (ASA), Automotive Warehouse Distributors Association (AWDA), Motorist Assurance Program (MAP), Motor & Equipment Manufacturers Association (MEMA), Specialty Equipment Market Association (SEMA), Tire Industry Association (TIA) and University of the Aftermarket.

R. L. Polk & Co. is the corporate sponsor of the Global Automotive Aftermarket Symposium.

GAAS Proceeds Invested in Industry Future

The GAAS scholarship program awarded 154 scholarships in 2007. Including the 2007 awards, GAAS has presented more than 1,300 scholarships and more than \$1.3 million since it was formed. Details about the GAAS scholarship program are available at www.automotivescholarships.com.

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