

GM Volunteers Aid in Promoting Engineering to Youth

Story and photo by Gerald Scott

"Problem solving is what engineers do - it's not just someone who runs a train."

Or so said Kim Tucker-Billingsley, GM Senior Project Engineer/Remediation Team, at the 2012 Volunteer Recognition Breakfast at the GM Tech Center in Warren last week.

GM honored its volunteers who participate in the AWM Program - a World in Motion, which is a charity effort to bring STEM education (science, technology, engineering and math) into the nation's classrooms.

AWIM is administered in association with SAE International and several SAE executives were on hand at the breakfast to acknowledge the overall efforts of hundreds of GM employees who participate in the program.

Tucker-Billingsley spoke as a representative of all the GM employees who bring STEM education to young people, typically in 4th through 8th grade classrooms across the country.

John Calabrese, GM vice president for Global Engineering, spoke about what the AWM volunteers mean to both GM and the community.

"When you think about what we've got through the last 5-6 years with the bankruptcy and such, you kept doing what you're doing on behalf of your communities (as AWM volunteers).

"It's pretty exciting. I'm honored to be part of the team and I'm honored to be representing General Motors and the team regarding this activity," Calabrese said.

"GM has engaged with this process for 20-21 years, since 1990. AWM has about 2,500 volunteers around the country and General Motors is almost 1,500 of those volunteers. You should feel proud to be affiliated with that team. Just here in Southeast Michigan, we have about 800 of that team.

"General Motors and you, the volunteers, are what makes this (work)," Calabrese added. "I'm proud to be affili-

ated with the company.

"(Meanwhile), I just had the chance to spend the last nine days over on the other side of the world in Korea and China and just got back.

"The United States has a problem, in my view . . . the U.S. is ranked 27th in the world relative to STEM. You go to other parts of the world and science-engineering is foundational.

"In 2006, 26 percent of the engineers of the U.S. were over the age of 50. So it's an aging population and we're not basically bringing in the 'backfill' - that's a concern when you think about it.

"You think about where we are (vis-à-vis) Asia. Effectively, only about 5 percent of the U.S. (university-level) student body get technical engineering degrees, where in Asia it's 20 percent. That's a big difference if you think of the statistics."

Other speakers on the breakfast program included Matt Miller, director, SAE Foundation, and Mark Johnson, chairman of the SAE Foundation Board of Trustees.

At General Motors, Tony Argote serves as AWM program manager. Note that Argote volunteers on behalf of AWM, otherwise his work title is EREV/BEV Performance Integration Engineer - Charging & Fuel Systems.

Like Calabrese, Argote also

Gratiot Cruise Expands to Include Five Pre-Event Eatery Gatherings

The public is invited to bring their classic cars to a week's worth of Pre-Cruise Car Shows ahead of the 2012 Clinton Township Gratiot Cruise, which is scheduled for Sunday, Aug. 5, along Gratiot between 14 and 16 Mile Roads.

From July 30 to Aug. 3, cruisers can reach several corners of Clinton Township with their favorite classic vehicle and get their Cruise Passport stamped for a chance at some great prizes.

"The Cruise Passport and the pre-cruise events are here to stay," said Tracey Moro,



GM Vice President of Global Engineering John Calabrese was the keynote speaker at the GM/AWM program breakfast last week.

acknowledged the wider efforts of GM volunteers in the classroom on behalf of the growing AWM program.

"I thank you guys for that," Argote said. "You are making a huge, tangible impact and I thank you for that. Now, when you look at our program and what we're trying to do as we grow, as an engineer, we're always looking for opportunities to continuously grow. For our customers, that's key.

"We want to make sure that we're advancing our products, we're advancing our processes, we're advancing the state of the company.

cruise communications director.

The pre-cruise events will be held from 4 to 8 p.m. on July 30 at Cheli's Chili Bar; July 31 at Big Boy restaurant; Aug. 1 at WiseGuys Bar & Grill; Aug. 2 at Concorde Inn; and Aug. 3 at Clancy's Irish Pub.

Each of the above businesses will be doing their own version of a car show with the cruise committee helping out.

Businesses will be giving away prizes each night with Cruise Passport prizes given away at the cruise car show at 3 p.m. at cruise headquarters.

Dealers File Suit Against Mahindra for Fraud

By KATE BRUMBACK
Associated Press

ATLANTA (AP) - Lawyers for U.S. automobile dealers said they've filed a lawsuit accusing an Indian truck manufacturer and its American counterpart of fraud, misrepresentation and conspiracy.

The lawyers said the suit was filed last week in federal court in Atlanta against Mahindra & Mahindra Ltd. and Mahindra USA Inc. on behalf of dealerships in New Hampshire, Florida, California, New Jersey and Washington.

The lawsuit claims that Mahindra duped hundreds of auto dealers and walked away with millions in cash and trade secrets.

"Mahindra told the dealers that its light trucks and SUVs were ready for delivery to the U.S. market," Michael Diaz, a lawyer for the dealers, said in a statement.

"However, Mahindra intentionally delayed certification

of its vehicles after obtaining the dealership fees and trade secrets and began pursuing other partners in the U.S. and elsewhere in clear violation of their commitments."

A statement on Mahindra's website says the company cannot comment on the legal matter but goes on to say the company "unequivocally denies all allegations of fraud, misrepresentation and conspiracy."

The auto dealers paid initial dealership fees, hired additional staff, did marketing and built Mahindra showrooms, display platforms and showcases, all at Mahindra's urging, the lawsuit says.

The lawsuit says Mahindra's efforts to enter the U.S. market and build a nationwide dealer network began in 2004. The company made an aggressive pitch to attract U.S. dealers, including sending senior executive Arun Jaura to an Atlanta automotive show in 2007, where he said he loved America.



The Dearborn architectural firm Ghafari Associates received the Ford World Excellence Award for supplier reliability. From left are Tony Brown (Ford), Yousif Ghafari (chairman, Ghafari), Alan Mullally (Ford) and Raj Nair (Ford).

Ghafari Receives Excellence Award

DEARBORN - Ghafari Associates was recognized by Ford Motor Co. as one of its top performing global suppliers in 2011, receiving the automaker's prestigious World Excellence Award at a reception on May 31.

The World Excellence Awards, Ford's highest recognition for its suppliers, honor companies that have demonstrated superior quality, delivery and cost performance.

Ghafari was the sole architecture/engineering (A/E) firm out of the 46 suppliers recognized at the event held at Ford World Headquarters.

"Suppliers are a critical part of our success, and a driving force for continued growth at Ford Motor Company," said

Ford's Tony Brown, Group vice president, Global Purchasing, who thanked each supplier for its dedication throughout 2011.

"Without the support, hard work and innovation of our suppliers, we would not be able to deliver on our promise to build quality vehicles."

Ghafari has enjoyed a longstanding relationship with Ford, having worked with the automaker on hundreds of projects ranging from facility upgrades to new assembly plants.

Last fall, Ford ranked Ghafari the highest among its A/E Alliance partners in a survey conducted by its Facilities Engineering Team.

"We are honored to receive the World Excellence Award," said Yousif Ghafari, the firm's

chairman and founder.

"Ford is an exceptionally loyal client that we have been proud to serve for the past 30 years. This award is a testament to our mutual commitment to quality and innovation, as well as the many successes we have shared in our years working together."

Ghafari is a leading full-service architecture, engineering, consulting and construction management organization with a 30-year history of client focus, quality design and technological innovation.

With offices around the globe, Ghafari today serves the automotive, aviation, commercial, education, government and industrial/manufacturing sectors.

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