FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: 29 May 2026

Media Contact: Teri Chouinard, SPE Thermoset Div. Marketing Manager 248.701.8003, intuitgroup@gmail.com

SPE® Thermoset TopCon 2026 Explored AI and the Future of Thermoset Manufacturing

SPE® Thermoset TopCon 2026 included 17 Technical Presentations, 6 Student Posters, 30 Sponsorships, and 1 Keynote Address

The annual SPE® Thermoset TopCon the “World’s Leading Thermoset Technology Conference & Expo” produced by the SPE Thermoset Division, was held May 12 – 13, 2026 at the Monona Terrace Community and Convention Center in Madison, Wisconsin.
It was a valuable event to exhibitors/sponsors and attendees representing OEMs, Tier Suppliers, Academia and other composites industry professionals.

“Thank you to everyone who attended the 2026 SPE Thermoset TopCon conference and to our sponsors and board members who made the conference possible,” said Sean Campbell, SPE Thermoset TopCon Chair & Commercial Director – Engineering Composites at LyondellBasell (LYB). “This year’s focus on AI and emerging industry innovations created exciting conversations around the future of thermoset technologies and advanced manufacturing. It was tremendous to see attendees so engaged with the technical program, networking opportunities, and forward-looking discussions that are helping shape the next generation of our industry,” added Campbell.

A number of thermoset leaders from industry provided direction and support for the event:

- Sean Campbell, LyondellBasell, 2023-2026 SPE Thermoset TopCon Chair
- Len Nunnery, Plenco, Division Counselor
- Andrew Stroh, LydondellBasell, Secretary
- Aleah Ryan, Plenco, Treasurer
- Walter Schutz, ICT Molding Solutions, Membership Chair
- Glade Squires, Omya, Board Member
- Greg Spaeth, Plenco, Board Member
- Dale Silvernell, IDI Composites International, Board Member
- Vinod Arora, Core Molding Technologies, Board Member
- Alec Redman, 3M Company, Board Member

Teri Chouinard, President of Intuit Group, provided leadership as SPE Thermoset TopCon Marketing, Sponsorship and Event Manager. Emilie Appleyard, Sales Assistant at Intuit Group, provided Admin Support for the Technical Program and support in all areas. Jill Peterson, President of JPI Creative, supported the event with Graphic Design and more.

The Keynote presented at the Thermoset TopCon 2026 event was:
“AI for Manufacturing” by Matt Seitz, Director: AI Hub for Business, University of Wisconsin.
The keynote was well attended and provided a great start to the conference and insights into this year’s conference theme around AI. Attendees noted it was very informative and beneficial for their business, and one of the best keynotes ever presented at the event!

The Thermoset TopCon 2026 technical program included 17 presentations on advances in the following categories: Materials, Molding, Technical, Business, and Sustainability.

The following technical presentations were:

- “Invest in Intelligence, Reap Rewards - An Abridged Case Study of the Materials Engineering Laboratory Expansion of Haysite Reinforced Plastics”, Peter Fitzgerald, Haysite
- “Flame Retardant and Antimony Oxide Market Update”, Glade Squires, Omya
- “The Izod Blind Spot: Experimental Proof that High-Speed Dynatup ASTM 3763 Test Differentiates Toughened SMCs where ASTM D256 Fails”, Vinod Arora, Core Molding Technologies & Justin Moss, METTON
- “Sustainable Design of BMC Composites Using Circular, Recycled and Renewable Raw Materials”, Hannah McClure & Dale Silvernell, IDI Composites International
- “A Look into the Operations of a Modern Mold Maker”, Bob Boland, Versatile Mold and Design

- “Towards Sustainable Resin “Kits” for Sheet Molding Compound”, Jonathan McKay, ALTA Performance Materials
- “Properties and Composite Applications of Nanocalcite-Modified Epoxies: Lightweighting Opportunities”, James Nelson, 3M Company
- “Digital Transformation in the Chemical Industry: From Strategy to Real-World Success”, Kevin J. Meyer, Albert Invent
- “Accelerated Fatigue Characterization of Composite Materials Through Entropy-Based Methodology”, Mohammad Rouhi Moghanlou, Louisiana State University
- “Global Composites Market Vision and Innovations in Sustainability”, Paul Salach, Owens Corning
- Development and Evaluation of Biochar-Filled Sheet Molding Compound (SMC) for
- “Low-Shrink and Fire-Retardant Formulation”, Eric Martin, Fraunhofer at Western University
- “Advanced Thermoset Composites: A Key Enabler in Next Generation Electronics”, Jeff Gotro, InnoCentrix
- “Preparing Your Lab for Industry 4.0: Automation, Clean Data, and AI in Material Development”, Guyth Abouyouniss, LabsCubed
- “AI Agents: Going Beyond Information Searching for Accelerating Composites Development,” Kirsten V. Sommers, Independent Consultant
- “Dielectric Cure Monitoring for Quality Testing of Sheet Molding Compound”, Huan Lee, Lambient Technologies
- “New Generation of Cobalt Free Accelerators for Thermoset Composites”, Andy Palsule, Nouryon
- “Experimental and Numerical Approach for Hybrid Fastening Systems with Dissimilar Substrates”, Kunle Adeyemo, Michigan State University

Four students from University of Wisconsin-Madison, a student from North Dakota State University, a student from Michigan State University and a student from Louisiana State University all featured innovative research related to thermosets via the annual Student Poster Competition.

This year’s winner was “Accelerated Fatigue Characterization of Thermoset Composites via Fracture Fatigue Entropy (FFE) Framework” by Mohammed Rouhi Moghanlou from Louisiana State University.

The fun kicked off early this year before the conference started with a day filled with networking and social activities around Madison. 22 conference attendees enjoyed a morning of golf at the University Ridge Golf Course, eight attendees toured the PEC at University of Wisconsin, and 11 attendees enjoyed a fun and beautiful sunset boat ride around Lake Monona.

The 2026 SPE Thermoset TopCon was made possible by the support of sponsors including:

Reception Sponsor: Plenco
Lunch Sponsors: Mar-Bal, Inc. & Omya
Breakfast Sponsor: IDI Composites
Platinum Sponsors: Composites One, Zehrco-Giancola Composites Inc., Premix Hadlock
Gold Sponsors: ALTA Performance Materials, American Colors, Ask Chemicals, Avinthia, Cimbar Resources, Johns Manville, LabsCubed, LyondellBasell, Mastermold, LLC., Polynt Group, Penn Compression Molding Inc
Silver Sponsors: Axel Plastics, Ci-Dell Thermoset Plastics, Core Molding Technologies, fmTec Solution, ICT Molding Products, Glenwood Tool & Mold, Inc., Lambient Technologies, Molding Products, Owens Corning
Media / Association Sponsors: Foam Expo North America, Plastics News, Urethanes Technology

XXX

Visit https://spethermosets.org/topcon/ for more info on the event.

The mission of SPE (Society of Plastics Engineers) is to promote scientific and engineering knowledge relating to plastics/polymers worldwide and to educate industry, academia, and the public about technological advances. The SPE Thermoset Division (a specialized technical division of SPE) is active in educating, promoting, recognizing, and communicating technical advancements in thermoset technology in multiple industries.

The next Thermoset TopCon is scheduled for May 11 – 12, 2027 at the same venue as the 2026 event - the Monona Terrace Community and Convention Center in Madison, Wisconsin. “Early Bird Sponsorship commitments are encouraged as limited Premium Sponsorships and Exhibit Spaces are available. For more info contact Intuitgroup@gmail.com

Attention Editors: Photos are available for download via: https://flic.kr/s/aHBqjCUn2g