

May Awards Night Highlights

AKRON SPE AWARDS NIGHT, by **Bill Bregar** (Reprinted with the permission of Plastics News)



AKRON, OHIO—The Akron Section of the Society of Plastics Engineers handed out awards and scholarships at its May 15 meeting—and named Sylvia Moore, an activist in the SPE Vinyl Division, as the newest member of the Hall of Honor.

Moore is the Akron-based director of technical development for Shintech Inc.

Akron Section President Robert Weiler said Moore deserves the Hall of Honor recognition for her service to the industry. She has ideas and follows through on them, said Weiler, who is Amfine Chemical Corp.'s North American sales manager of and manager of the flame-retardant product line.

Weiler told his fellow SPE members that the Akron Section won three awards at Antec 2017, held in Anaheim, Calif., the week before the Akron Awards Night meeting. The section won the two national SPE awards: Communications Leader and Pinnacle Gold Award. The student chapter was honored as Outstanding Student Chapter.

Another local award, the William C. Zekan Memorial Service Award, went to Kevin Cavicchi of the University of Akron, where he is associate dean of academic affairs and an associate professor of the Department of Polymer Engineering. The Zekan award recognizes service to the SPE Akron Section. Cavicchi has served on the board of directors, as chairman of the education committee. He played an active role in the section's scholarship and essay competition.

And the Akron Section handed out those scholarships and the essay award. Caelin Burke of Holy Trinity School in Avon, won the essay contest, writing, "The Gift of Plastics in Society." Burke's teacher is Nicole Castrigano.

Special Merit Scholarships to the University of Akron went to four students: Walid Abuhashim of Nordonia High School, Nicolette Athans of Glenn Oak High School, Tanner Brahler, who attends Stark State College but plans to transfer to the UA and major in polymer engineering, and Emma Harmon of Glen Oak.

Steven Prexta, of Green High School, won a Special Merit Scholarship for Ohio State University.

The Goodyear Scholarship was awarded to Connor O'Brien of Glenn Oak High School, who will attend Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University.

The Newell Rubbermaid Scholarship went to Eric Britton, who attends the University of Akron.

The Jim Steiner Memorial Scholarship was won by Gina Tubo for the University of Akron.

The Kenneth L. Sharp Memorial Scholarship went to Joseph Rizzo Jr., who is attending Ohio State.

In a keynote speech at Awards Night, Professor Sadhan Jana, chairman of the Department of Polymer Engineering at the University of Akron, outlined the changing landscape in polymer research. He worked at General Electric's Corporate Research Center for four years before joining UA in 1998.



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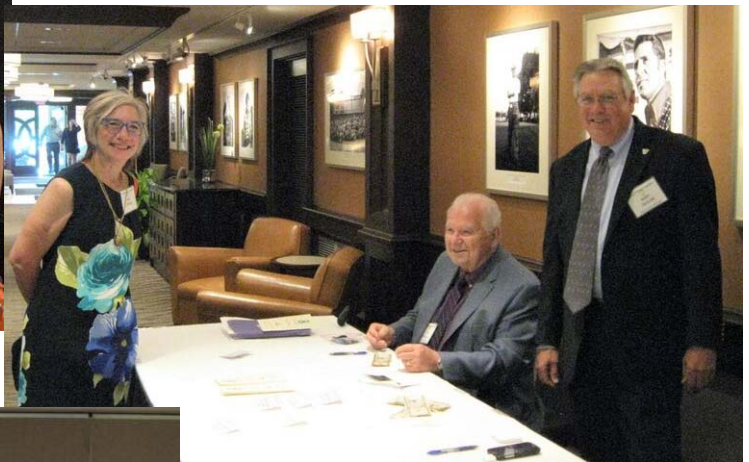


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Jana said it's important for business to work with colleges. "I tell some of my industrial co that some of the problems that you have, we do not think about them every day (at the university), but if you do come to our laboratories, we have experts from other fields where we can help you," he said.

Jana reviewed journal and trade magazine articles over the past five years, and found strong emphasis on news about materials. He discussed trends such as automotive lightweighting that includes work to use hollow glass microspheres and hybrid glass fibers in composites, the all-polymer engine, 3D printing, foaming and new technology for tires, such as the use of lignin from the paper and wood industries, as a filler mixed with carbon black in tires.

Jana described research done by a University of Akron student into aerogels to make a mask that can filter out nano-materials, for workers in factories that produce them, and to screen out air pollution.



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