**TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 12**

**8 a.m.-8:45 a.m.**

*Hunting Unicorns: Talent Acquisition in Today’s Plastics Industry*

A recent headline in a plastics industry publication stated that there were 20,000 unfilled jobs in Elkhart County, Indiana. The Bureau of Labor Statistics suggests that we are nearing full employment, meaning that everyone who wants a job has one.

So why do surveys continue to suggest that manufacturers struggle to find qualified people? How exactly does one define the “skills gap”? These and other important questions will be discussed in our panel discussion. Representatives from recruitment firms, technical colleges, thermoforming processors and workforce development offices will provide insights and thoughts on this critical topic.

**Moderator:** Conor Carlin, Editor of *SPE Thermoforming Quarterly*® magazine  
**Panelists:** Monica Jacobs, KLA Industries  
Shannon Munro, Pennsylvania College of Technology  
Dan Sproles, Medallion Plastics

**4 p.m.-4:45 p.m.**

*The Blame Game*

In this technical session, we will tackle complex quality issues that have plagued both thin gauge and thick gauge molders for years. We have assembled an expert panel to debate these issues representing companies that compromise the thermoforming supply chain, including resin compounders, extruders, processors, a color house and tool maker. Assigning blame may not be a simple answer, but it will be hotly debated.

Topics include:

- I have gels and pits in my decorative or clear sheet: who is at fault?
- My sheet has inconsistent forming, resulting in thinning and webbing: who is at fault?
- The color and gloss of my thermoformed parts does not match the standard: who is at fault?
- I have stress whitening or whitening in my thermoformed parts: who is at fault?

**Moderator:** Ed Probst, Probst Plastics Consulting  
**Processors:** Steve Murrill, Profile Plastics, Evan Gilham, Productive Plastics  
**Extruders:** Matt Vandivier, Primex Plastics, John Thibado, Advanced Extrusion Inc., Eric Short, PMC  
**Resin:** Joseph Paolucci, Braskem, Sunit Shah, Lyondellbasell  
**Color House:** Nick Gaudino, Standridge Color  
**Tooling:** Ken Griep, PCM
WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 13

1:30 p.m.-3:15 p.m.
*The War Room: Where Thermoforming and Design Meet!*
Our diverse and talented team of processors will meet with the customer to win some new business:

The Confident Industrial Designer: Michael Paloian, Integrated Design Systems
The Clever Problem Solver: Ed Probst, Probst Plastics Consulting
The Arrogant Engineer: Steve Zamprelli, Formed Plastics
The Outspoken Director of Sales: Jim Arnet, Hagans Plastics
The Crafty Mold Maker: Mauro Fae, SELF SRL
The Witty Processor: Eric Short, PMC

Our team will use their on-the-spot thinking skills to develop an approach to the project that will suit the customer’s needs. Use your skills and love of the thermoforming process to help the processors convince the designer to use your process and to win some highly-coveted projects. This fun and informative session will provide insight on problem solving, opportunities for cost reduction, and the overall design process. It will also address the challenge that business owners face daily: “Do we really want to take on this job?”