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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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SPE NAMES DENNIS HAGAN THERMOFORMER OF THE YEAR

CAROL STREAM, IL, U.S.A., July 20, 2023: The Society of Plastics Engineers (SPE) Thermoforming Division has named Dennis Hagan as Thermoformer of the Year.

The award will be presented during SPE's Thermoforming Conference Awards Gala, held on October 25th in conjunction with the 29th SPE Thermoforming Conference®. The conference will take place **October 24-26, 2023 in Cleveland, OH**, at the Huntington Convention Center.

Dennis Hagan began working in the Thermoforming Industry 50 years ago, when his father opened Hagans Plastics in 1973. Eager to learn, Dennis took on all tasks, and as his experience grew, so did his level of input into company decisions. When Hagans Plastics earned a contract to produce the interiors of the command-and-control aircraft, Dennis got his first shot at thermoforming aerospace parts. Unbeknownst to Dennis, this cold war era point of entry would later become an integral part of his future.

Always a visionary, Dennis constantly sought opportunities to produce the best parts possible. Recognizing that CNC machines produced more consistently cut parts more quickly and efficiently, Dennis spearheaded Hagans Plastics' first CNC machine purchase in 1990. The machine would increase efficiency and accuracy when trimming parts. Since no one was trained to do the programming, Dennis took the initiative to learn what he needed to know, and off Hagans went.

Over the next few years, Hagans Plastics continued to grow. Using the business principles he learned from his father, Dennis became the owner and president of Hagans Plastics in 1996. Dennis's impact on the company then began to really take hold. His desire to operate the best equipment, technology, and well-trained staff enabled Hagans Plastics to make high-quality parts. As a result, the company's brand recognition grew exponentially.

In the mid-90's, Hagans Plastics expanded its plant to keep up with increased business volume. Additional thermoforming and CNC machines were purchased to meet the increased demand for high-quality parts. While the business grew across all sectors, the aerospace industry took notice of the company's capabilities. In 2011, Recaro Seating, a long-time customer and German company, presented Dennis and Hagans Plastics with its first-ever American Supplier of the Year Award. Hagans Plastics was selected for this prestigious award based on the quality of the parts, its exceptional customer service, and the can-do attitude that Hagans Plastics demonstrates with each project.

As the business grew and evolved, Dennis added a state-of-the-art quality room and department to the plant. He also knew, however, that he could do more to improve part quality, especially with higher precision. With the purchase of a FARO laser, the level of quality increased- not just for the aerospace industry, but for every market he served. A second FARO laser was added in 2022 to further enhance tool production, trim fixtures, and reverse engineering.

Dennis's can-do attitude is reflected in Hagans Plastics' vast customer base. Whether he is making parts that fly into space on the space shuttle or the costume head of Chuck E. Cheese, his expectations for quality have never wavered. Fifty years after he began working in the industry, Hagans Plastics continues to retain loyal customers some 30-40+ years later.

Dennis is also well-respected in the extrusion industry. Numerous extrusion companies have contacted Hagans to test their products and the company is known for providing accurate and unbiased results. In 2016, Dennis was approached by National Non-Woven, a company that had a new type of composite material that might be suitable for thermoforming. Dennis invested time and money to test and experiment with this new material, and Hagans Plastics successfully formed complex parts from this innovative material. Because of these favorable test results, Hagans Plastics was awarded the exclusive right to process this new material. A military project was evaluating and considering this material, and after additional testing, Hagans Plastics was awarded the contract. This material and part for a Chinook helicopter won Gold in the 2021 SPE Thermoforming Parts Competition, for parts produced with automation and new technology.

While Dennis has demonstrated great business acumen, he must also be recognized for his commitment and devotion to his workforce. Dennis has always considered the people who work for Hagans Plastics as the lifeblood of the business. He believes in promoting from within and regularly acknowledges the successes of his people. As a result, Hagans Plastics has retained some of the same employees for over 45 years!

Dennis also is active in the local community and offers internships to area high school students. Hagans Plastics also donated a thermoforming machine and other equipment to the local high school training program. The company has been a longtime supporter of SPE since the mid-1980s, and Dennis continues to support his staff's participation in Thermoforming Division activities.

In honor of its 50 years in business, the Mayor of the City of Grand Prairie, TX recently presented Dennis Hagan with a proclamation recognizing Hagans Plastics.

“Dennis Hagan’s 50 years in thermoforming is a truly remarkable accomplishment. He has worked tirelessly to push the boundaries of thermoformed parts and has proved that this technology continues to have tremendous capabilities,” said Ed Probst, SPE Thermoforming Division Chair. “The SPE Thermoforming Division Board is honored to name Dennis Hagan as the 2023 SPE Thermoformer of the Year.”

Past recipients of the Thermoformer of the Year Award may be found on the SPE Thermoforming Division website at <https://thermoformingdivision.com/awards-recognitions/thermoformer-of-the-year/past-winners/>.

More information is available at <https://thermoformingdivision.com> or by contacting Shameka Jennings at 1-240-393-6567, or info@thermoformingdivision.com.

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THE SPE THERMOFORMING DIVISION is a technical division of the Society of Plastics Engineers, based in Danbury, CT. The Thermoforming Division’s mission is to facilitate the advancement of thermoforming technologies through education, application, promotion and research. The Division hosts an annual educational conference and publishes an award-winning technical journal, *SPE Thermoforming Quarterly*®. The Division has also funded over \$275K in equipment grants and tens of thousands of dollars in undergraduate scholarships since it was first formed. For more information, please visit <https://thermoformingdivision.com>.