

## Speech by Ken Braney, President 2010-2011

As I begin both this speech and my term as President of the Society, I need to recognize, with gratitude, Dr. Paul Andersen, the outgoing President of the Society, who guided us through what was arguably one of the most difficult years in the Society's history. My sincere thanks, Paul.

It is with great pleasure that I take on the role of President of our growing, global Society.

Tim Womer, a past president of the Society, once said that if he had known, as a country boy from Pennsylvania, he would become President of SPE, he would not have believed it.

In my case, as a boy growing up in London, I would have had difficulty even knowing what this organisation was; called SPE.

Fortunately, I did learn about the Society and its value to both our industry and to me personally. I joined and grew with the organisation; and now, becoming President is just a great feeling!

I am the first person to become President who is NOT a North American *resident*.

While SPE has benefited from having a number of non-American-born Presidents in the past, all of those colleagues came through SPE as residents of either the U.S. or Canada.

I will be the first President that came through SPE's leadership ranks via a European group – the European Thermoforming Division. I think this reflects the fact that SPE has genuinely become more global in recent years, and that many leaders are now emerging from outside SPE's traditional markets.

From around the world, SPE members lead our industry by providing the sound science needed for plastics to be used responsibly in our environment and to enhance our lives. Our members address important technical and social concerns, such as affordable clean energy, recyclability, climate change, human health, and the elimination of poverty. Many of these efforts are evident here at ANTEC in the sessions you will be attending over the next few days.

SPE also leads our industry in giving directly to the next generation of plastics professionals by providing well over \$100,000 each year

in scholarships, primary and secondary school programs, and educational grants.

From our beginnings in 1942 in Michigan, SPE has become a global organisation reaching out to all members of the plastics industry. We are growing everywhere – India, Europe, the Middle East, North and South America, and, of course, in the Asia-Pacific region.

Just as SPE is open and relevant to people from all over the world, SPE is likewise welcoming to plastics professionals from any and all disciplines. We are an organisation supporting anyone who has a connection to the plastics industry, from scientists to sales people, from accountants to marketing experts.

With this in mind, we are reaching out to more companies, organizations and individuals than ever before through a variety of corporate programs, special visits, and new partnerships.

With the introduction of SPE's Corporate Affiliate Program, we are finding more ways to cooperate and gain direct support for our mission from companies.

While SPE is a leading organization for the industry, we also recognize that SPE is part of a broader community of professional organizations. As President, I will be working to develop strategic partnerships, creating a “global alliance” with organizations that can

enhance our member benefits, and extend our standards of technical excellence to new audiences.

SPE is also leading the way in a world undefined by geography. Over the past 18 months, SPE's social networking programs have exploded. Our communities on LinkedIn and Facebook continue to grow at impressive rates, and to offer members new tools for learning and networking with each other. SPE likewise uses Twitter and other Web technologies to continually find new ways to reach our members, or help members reach out to one another.

As we develop new networks and welcome new members from all disciplines and geographies, we recognize that SPE's organizational structures, technologies and governance must keep pace. I will continue the work started by Paul Andersen to explore new and alternative operating models with the goal of maintaining SPE's leadership within our industry and relevance to our membership.

We are making impressive progress in becoming a global organisation, but we have not yet reached our full potential.

A major goal for my term as President is to promote world-wide growth for our Society, and to achieve that goal, we need your help.

The time is now to capitalize on the excellence of our Sections and Divisions to create a significant jump in membership. The challenge is how to achieve this growth.

I believe every member has a role in growing SPE, and must be offered opportunities to be involved. I invite every one of you listening to me today to get involved in carrying the message of SPE to your friends and colleagues. In this age of technology, personal referrals and outreach have become more important, and everyone has a role in helping SPE grow.

Likewise, I cannot extol enough the professional rewards of becoming involved as a leader in SPE.

Leadership of such a diverse and global Society must reflect all aspects of the organization, and come from all disciplines, technologies and geographies.

If you are already volunteering with SPE in any way, Thank You.

If you have not yet done so, please consider finding a way to support our mission and our industry through SPE.

Get involved. Participate in SPE events, activities and online groups. Serve on a Section or Division board. Contribute content to SPE's

conferences, publications and website. Join us on LinkedIn or Facebook.

I guarantee that what you give to the Society will come back to you 10-fold throughout your career.

Finally, again, I want to thank the Society and my member colleagues for the valuable help and support they have given me over the years. We are all now set on a path that will confirm and continue our role as the Leading Plastics Society in the World!!