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WMU Formula SAE team competes, wins exhibition competition

WMU's Formula SAE (FSAE) team designed and built a car that was entered in the 2008 Formula SAE® competition held last spring at the Michigan International Speedway, Brooklyn, Mich. The WMU entry placed 63 in a field of 105 international competitors and earned praise for many components.



Some of the Formula SAE team leaders are (front, left to right) Brian Doorlag, Jeremiah McClintock, Jordan Wagner, and Nathan Urban and (standing from left): Vivek Kumar, Scott Kennedy, Estreberto Marin, Sarah Gerbig, Jeff Terry, Paul Mavrikos, Chris Hartman, Paul Rotarius, Ryan Koch, Geoff Van Gemert, Frank Pulte, and Girish KulKamii

Also, the FSAE team won first place in the Student Exhibit Competition held at Cobo Hall in Detroit in conjunction with the SAE 2008 World Congress. The competition, sponsored by Eaton Corporation, required that the Congress theme, "A Climate for Change" be incorporated into the exhibit.

Exhibit judging included a formal 10-minute presentation by two team members and informal discussion with the judges. Five FSAE team members displayed the FSAE project, competed for prizes, and networked with manufacturers, suppliers, and alumni.

"It is a great joy for me and an honor for our FSAE Team to win this prestigious award," said **Dr. Parviz Merati**, MAE chair and professor.

Dr. Claudia Fajardo, an assistant professor in the Department of Mechanical and Aeronautical Engineering (MAE) and one of the SAE advisers, praised the entire FSAE team and especially the five – all enrolled in MAE programs – who represented WMU at the competition: **Sarah Gerbig, Brian Doorlag, Geoffrey Van Gemert, Michael Nienhuis and Kyle Schmidt**. "The competition is one of the most exciting activities of the Congress," she said. "The students showcase the technical merit of the Formula SAE

vehicle design and the project's business and teamwork aspects."

Gerbig and Doorlag created a two-part presentation with both business and engineering aspects. In the "Re-fueling for Future Generations," Gerbig presented the organizational and leadership changes the WMU team made this year to improve efficiency and effectiveness. In "Changing Gears," Doorlag discussed design changes the team made to the differential to simplify it and to reduce its weight and cost.

Other universities that competed included Michigan Tech, University of Michigan, Michigan State University, University of Toledo, and Central Michigan University.

"Overall, the 2008 SAE World Congress was a great experience for everyone involved," Gerbig said. "It was a great opportunity for students who attended to network with hundreds of OEMs and automotive suppliers, along with several other universities' groups."

Others who contributed to the FSAE project are MAE faculty members **Dr. Bade Shrestha**, a co-adviser, and **Dr. Richard Hathaway**, who provided technical advice. **Tom Sutton**, an instructor in the Department of Industrial and Manufacturing Engineering, assisted in the testing stages.



More than 65 attended the SAE team organizational meeting this fall

This fall, the SAE organizational meeting attracted more than 65 students. Membership is open to anyone interested in cars, and no previous experience is required. This year's major activity involves the design and development of a Formula car to represent WMU at the 2009 Formula SAE® competition.

The SAE student chapter meets every other Wednesday at 6:30 p.m. in the F-115 study lounge area at Parkview. Those interested in attending a meeting should email the team at wmuformularacing@gmail.com. SAE information is available on the official Web site at <http://www.rso.wmich.edu/sae>

Send your thoughts or suggestions for future topics to the editor at jerrie.fiala@wmich.edu. Thank you.