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GAAS 2009 Enlists Three Experts to Help Industry Understand Current Economic Climate

Attendees can draw upon the wisdom of economic analysts from the private sector, Federal Reserve and Wall Street

CHICAGO, IL – March 12, 2009 – One of the greatest challenges facing aftermarket businesses is making sense of today's puzzling economic times. That's why the organizers of the Global Automotive Aftermarket Symposium (GAAS) have scheduled three different sessions during the 2009 program to help the industry executives understand today's recessionary climate in order to make future business plans.

Jeff Applegate, chief investment officer, Citi Global Wealth Management, will open the 2009 symposium with an **"Economic Outlook for 2009 and Beyond."** Meanwhile, William A. Strauss, senior economist and economic advisor, Federal Reserve Bank of Chicago, will present, **"Signs of the Times: Perspectives on Falling Energy Prices, Credit Market Meltdown, Housing Bubble Burst and More."** The closing session of the 2009 symposium will be provided by Tony Cristello, senior vice president, BB&T Capital Markets, as he addresses, **"The Investor's View of the Aftermarket."**

"All of us are frustrated trying to make business decisions based on economic forecasts presented by the mainstream media," said Dave Caracci, GAAS chairman. "We are excited to present the viewpoints of three financial experts who come from the private sector, the Federal Reserve and Wall Street, and understand the needs and challenges of our industry. Whether you are a NAFTA parts distributor, a global parts manufacturer or considering personal retirement options, what these guys have to say is important to everyone. These sessions alone should be considered 'must attend' by aftermarket executives."

With a theme of **"Winning Strategies in a Changing Aftermarket,"** the 14th GAAS will be held Wednesday, May 6 and Thursday, May 7 at the Hyatt Regency O'Hare near Chicago. The early-bird registration savings discount of \$200 per person expires on Friday, March 20. Register now for the symposium online at www.globalsymposium.org.

About the Global Automotive Aftermarket Symposium

Founded in 1996, the Global Automotive Aftermarket Symposium (GAAS) has become the premier industry conference for senior-level aftermarket executives. The net proceeds from the event go toward funding industry scholarships. In 2008, 115 students who plan careers in the automotive aftermarket received GAAS Scholarships to help get their industry careers started. In the twelve years of the program, more than 1,400 students have received aid totaling more than \$1,400,000. Details about the GAAS scholarship program are available at www.automotivescholarships.com.

The GAAS program is a joint professional education effort of the of the Alliance of State Automotive Aftermarket Associations (ASAAA), Automotive Aftermarket Industry Association (AAIA), Automotive Aftermarket Suppliers Association (AASA), Automotive Industries Association (AIA) of Canada, Automotive Parts Remanufacturers Association (APRA), Automotive Service Association (ASA), Automotive Warehouse Distributors Association (AWDA), Motorist Assurance Program (MAP), Motor & Equipment Manufacturers Association (MEMA), Specialty Equipment Market Association (SEMA), Tire Industry Association (TIA) and University of the Aftermarket. R.L. Polk & Co. is the corporate sponsor of the Global Automotive Aftermarket Symposium. For more information, visit www.globalsymposium.org.

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