



## **Mar-Bal Partners with University EcoCAR 3 Teams**

Chagrin Falls, OH (November 3, 2015) - Virginia Tech (VT) students “invent the future” every day through research and creativity. The Hybrid Electric Vehicle Team of Virginia Tech (HEVT) is doing just that as they take on a four-year hybrid vehicle competition.

HEVT has been working on advancing vehicle technology since 1994. The team is currently comprised of around 50 undergraduate students who are competing in EcoCAR 3, a collegiate competition sponsored by General Motors and the U.S. Department of Energy.

Sixteen colleges are participating in the competition, with the goal to reengineer a 2016 Chevrolet Camaro to be more fuel-efficient, all while maintaining aspects such as safety and performance.

EcoCAR 3 is split into four one-year phases, with a competition at the end of each phase. Currently, HEVT is in year two of the competition, the design phase. HEVT placed second at year one competition.

“The Year Two Competition is focused on the continuation of the engineering design process and the beginning of the vehicle build,” said William Dvorkin, HEVT EcoCar 3 project manager. “For us to score well this year, all components must be installed in our vehicle, and it needs to be able to safely operate with basic functionality.”

The competition gives VT students the opportunity to apply what they have learned in the classroom to a meaningful experience. Technical challenges and barriers due to limited experience are two of the obstacles HEVT has encountered.

“Being a leader on this team puts you at the heart of a fast-paced environment with tons of smart and hard-working students who are constantly trying to better themselves and this team, and you can't stop it from rubbing off onto you,” Dvorkin said. “I can't give enough credit to our undergraduate engineering students who balance their HEVT responsibilities with the rest of their schoolwork and lives outside of the classroom and lab.”

West Virginia University (WVU) is also participating in EcoCAR 3. HEVT is serving as a mentor to WVU, assisting with the technical standpoint of the project. However, each team has mutually assisted each other along the way.

“Virginia Tech is a veteran of the EcoCAR competitions and their team has a lot of valuable experience,” said Chelsea Betts, WVU EcoCAR 3 communication manager. “As our mentor, they are always offering to help in any way that they can and they have a lot of great advice to give. It has been a wonderful experience working with them and learning from a team that wants us to succeed as well.”

Dr. Andrew Nix, a Virginia Tech alumnus, is WVU's EcoCAR 3 academic advisor. Nix won the advisor of the year award in April 2015 for all EcoCAR 3 teams.

“Sometimes team members joke around with Dr. Nix and tell him that he has to choose a side and that it better be WVU,” said Garret Carden, WVU EcoCAR 3 development officer. “But all joking aside, that connection is what makes our teams so close. We don’t think of Virginia Tech as a rival in this competition because we are all in this together.”

Mar-Bal has sponsored both VT and WVU EcoCAR 3 teams, and has spoken to the WVU team to raise awareness about composites. Mar-Bal plans to speak to HEVT on November 9.

“The EcoCar 3 project represents one of our university outreach programs and we are very excited to be working with Virginia Tech and West Virginia University on this revolutionary development,” stated Ron Poff, Director of Global Marketing and Brands for Mar-Bal, Inc. “We started 2015 with a strategic marketing plan to engage with the university community - both students and faculty – to share the benefits and advantages of composites while also developing relationships with the next generation of engineers. We feel that these relationships will help to drive potential commercialization of academic research, increase the awareness of composites and ultimately grow the specification of composites in the future. It has been a pleasure to get to know the Engineering students at both Virginia Tech and West Virginia University over the past few months. Their eagerness to expand their knowledge base about composites and also get to know more about manufacturing has been very energizing.”

For more information about HEVT visit <http://ecocar3.org/vthevt/about-us/> and <https://www.facebook.com/vtHEVT>.

For more information about EcoCAR 3 at WVU visit <http://ecocar3.org/wvu/about-us/> and <https://www.facebook.com/wvuecar3>.

For more information about Mar-Bal, Inc., visit: [www.mar-bal.com](http://www.mar-bal.com) or call 440-539-6595.

*Press Release drafted by Ashlyn Davidson, PR Intern for Mar-Bal, Inc. and a Senior Public Relations Major at Virginia Tech.*

#### **About Mar-Bal, Inc.**

Mar-Bal, Inc., headquartered in Chagrin Falls, OH, is a compounder and molder of Thermoset composite products. Since 1970, Mar-Bal has engineered and manufactured quality, customized materials and parts while delivering unmatched client cost-effectiveness through superior customer service and commitment to the total value. Mar-Bal serves the appliance, electrical and industrial marketplaces from their four facilities in North America and Asia Sales Office located in Shanghai, China. Mar-Bal, an ISO 9001:2008 Registered Company, continues to develop innovative products and has a portfolio of brands and proprietary products. [www.mar-bal.com](http://www.mar-bal.com).

#### **Media Contact:**

Mar-Bal, Inc.

Ron Poff – Director, Global Marketing and Brands

PH: 440-539-6595 Email: [ron.poff@mar-bal.com](mailto:ron.poff@mar-bal.com)