

**Hybrid Plastics To Team With University of Southern Mississippi;  
Plans Pilot Plant and Technical Support Center in Hattiesburg, Mississippi**

Fountain Valley, CA: Hybrid Plastics and The University of Southern Mississippi have entered into an agreement to collaborate in the research, development and commercialization of POSS<sup>®</sup> polymers and derivative nanocomposites. This will include the company establishing a 1,500 square-foot research laboratory within Southern Miss' Shelby Freeland Thames Polymer Science Building. The parties also expect to collaborate in the establishment of a Nanotechnology Center of Excellence, located at Southern Miss, which focuses on the application and adoption of nanotechnology by industry and government. Focus areas include the use of nanotechnology to provide value enhancements in agricultural products, cosmetics, electronics polymers, coatings, paints, and composites.

Additionally, the Area Development Partnership (ADP), the City of Hattiesburg and Forrest County are supporting the building a 26,000 square-foot manufacturing facility with money borrowed from the Mississippi Development Authority and will lease the building back to Hybrid Plastics. This joint partnership with Southern Miss and the City of Hattiesburg will allow Hybrid Plastics to conduct research at the University, as well as manufacture and provide technical support for its award-winning POSS<sup>®</sup> Nanostructured<sup>®</sup> materials at the Hattiesburg/Forest County Industrial Park.

The company's move represents the first step toward the University's goal of luring high-tech companies to its proposed "innovation and commercialization park," launched jointly with the ADP and funded in part by a \$2 million grant secured recently by Sen. Thad Cochran, R-Miss. Once completed, the park - to be built on part of the 500 acres owned by the University near Classic Drive - would house a variety of research-intensive projects with commercial viability.

Carl Hagstrom, Chief Operating Officer of Hybrid Plastics, said his company's desire to move to Hattiesburg was threefold. "First, we wanted to affiliate with Southern Miss as one of the top 10 polymer science programs in the country. Secondly, we wanted the ability to build a pilot plant where we could scale up production to true manufacturing quantities. To have this kind of facility located where we are doing our research is ideal. Finally, Mississippi is a business friendly state, and we have all the amenities in Hattiesburg that we can get anywhere else in the country."

POSS<sup>®</sup> is a revolutionary new Nanotechnology based on silicon-derived building blocks that provide nanometer-scale control to dramatically improve the thermal and mechanical properties of traditional polymers while offering easy incorporation using existing manufacturing protocols. These compounds have an average diameter of just 1.5 nanometers, or billionth of a meter. POSS<sup>®</sup> nanomaterials can be used both as direct replacements for hydrocarbon based materials or as low-density performance additives to traditional plastics. They release no VOCs, and, thereby, produce no odor or air pollution. They are biocompatible, recyclable, non-flammable, and competitively priced with traditional polymer feedstocks. POSS<sup>®</sup> Nanostructured<sup>®</sup> materials can be readily incorporated into virtually any existing polymer system through blending, grafting or copolymerization.

These POSS® nanobuilding-blocks were hailed by R&D magazine as one of the 100 most technologically significant new products for the year 2000. Recently, Hybrid Plastics was one of five finalists for the Small Times Magazine's *2002 Best of Small Tech Award* for its POSS® Nanostructured® materials. The Small Times Magazine Best of Small Tech Awards recognize globally the best people, products and companies in nanotechnology, MEMS and microsystems.

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