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ON REFLECTION

LAMBO LEAP

COMPOSITES LAB SPLITS FROM UW TO FOCUS MORE ON INDUSTRIAL APPLICATIONS.

by Bill Virgin

THE UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON made considerable marketing hay from having the Automobili Lamborghini Advanced Composite Structures Laboratory (ACSL) on its campus, and why not? Aside from the association with the maker of some of the fastest and coolest cars on the planet, having the lab on campus put the UW squarely in the middle of one of the hottest fields in tech today: advanced materials.

But the marketing flurry is gone because so is the lab. Last year, the “Lambo Lab” moved to its own facility in Seattle’s Interbay neighborhood. Blame the split on the advanced materials world equivalent of “artistic differences.” As a part of the university’s College of Engineering, says



Paolo Feraboli, the lab’s founder and director, “We really didn’t fit anymore. We’re very applied; we design stuff. ... They tend to be very focused on theoretical and non-industry-focused activities, while we are very industry focused.”

The lab’s operations haven’t changed greatly since its separation from the uni-

ON THE ROAD AGAIN. Paolo Feraboli took Lamborghini Lab off campus. “We really didn’t fit anymore,” he says.

versity. Feraboli still has to bring in clients aside from Lamborghini to sponsor research and development work, but he adds,

“The reality is when you’re a professor at a Tier 1 university, you have to bring in business.”

And the ACSL is doing just that. Aerospace clients include Boeing, Gulfstream

STATSHOT

One of These Deals Is Not Like the Others

Here are the average annual salaries of starting quarterbacks on this season’s final eight NFL playoff teams, reflecting base pay and bonuses. Having led the Seahawks to two straight Super Bowls, **Russell Wilson** can expect a nice bump in net income with a new contract next season. Can the Seahawks pay him the market rate for star QBs and keep their Super Bowl mojo intact?

PLAYER	ANNUAL SALARY	CURRENT CONTRACT
Russell Wilson (Seattle)	\$749,176	4 years through 2015
Cam Newton (Carolina)	\$5,506,375	4 years through 2015
Andrew Luck (Indianapolis)	\$5,527,000	4 years through 2015
Tom Brady (New England)	\$14,120,000	5 years through 2017
Tony Romo (Dallas)	\$18,000,000	6 years through 2019
Peyton Manning (Denver)	\$19,200,000	5 years through 2016
Joe Flacco (Baltimore)	\$20,100,000	6 years through 2018
Aaron Rodgers (Green Bay)	\$22,000,000	5 years through 2019

SOURCE: SPOTRAC



SHELL CORPORATION.

The Lamborghini lab uses a forged composite process to create a monocoque that reduces vehicle weight by 25 percent.

and China's Comac. It also has a Nagoya, Japan, facility, which has done work for Callaway Golf, a Canadian mountain-bike company and a European maker of snowboard bindings.

The lab is pushing ahead with a technology it calls forged composites. It replaces the labor-intensive process of building components by manually placing sheets of carbon-fiber composite fabric in molds with a technique using high pressure and a paste-like mixture combining fiber and resin. "It enables the manufacturer to make complex shapes in a cost-effective way very quickly," Feraboli explains.

As a faculty member at the UW, Feraboli taught classes that had to adhere to the university schedule. Now, with its own academy as part of the lab, Feraboli can structure classes that accommodate the schedules of professionals in the composites world. The classes combine classroom and lab work and can last as little as one day and have as few as four students.

The ACSL's mission isn't simply to design what will be the next-generation sports car, aircraft component or piece of sports equipment, or to train others how to make them. Feraboli wants to make sure "everybody in Seattle knows about the lab." And he wants to make it "one of the pinnacles of composites activity" in the United States.

"I want to bring attention to the fact that the stuff we do for these companies is made in the U.S., not abroad, that stuff can be done in the U.S.," Feraboli asserts. "What I'd like to do is be a poster child for that." **SB**

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