Zurich, January 29, 2009 – Quadrant, a global leader in the manufacturing of high-performance thermoplastics and composites, conferred the coveted international «Quadrant Award» for the third time last Saturday. The international invitation to submit entries for the award was addressed to graduates who had written a doctoral thesis in the field of «Materials and processes related to engineering and high-performance plastics and composites» between November 1, 2006, and September 30, 2008. This scientific award with a first prize of EUR 15,000 was won by the US researcher Dr. Rodney Priestley, who wrote his thesis at Northwestern University, Evanston / Chicago, USA, and is now pursuing post-doctoral studies at the École Supérieure de Physique et Chimie Industrielles de la Ville de Paris, France. In September 2009, Rodney Priestley will join the Department of Chemical Engineering at Princeton University, New Jersey, USA, as an assistant professor. The second prize of EUR 7,000 went to the Polish-American scientist Dr. Paul Podsiadlo, from University of Michigan, Detroit, USA. Dr. Paul Podsiadlo is currently a Willard Frank Libby post-doctoral Fellow at the Argonne National Laboratories' in the Center for Nanoscale Materials, USA. The winner of the third prize of EUR 3,000 was Dr. Edwin P. Chan, USA, at the University of Massachusetts Amherst, USA, who is now pursuing post-doctoral studies at the National Institute of Standards and Technology in Gaithersburg, USA. The event took place at the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology (ETH) in Zurich, Switzerland.

The academic jury awarded the first prize to Rodney Priestley for his thesis entitled «Effects of nanoscale confinement and interfaces on the structural relaxation of amorphous polymers monitored at the molecular scale by fluorescence and dielectric spectroscopy», because he «presented important and innovative elements to answer the question “why confinement may lead to the development of polymer glasses that do not physically age”. His work is an exceptional combination of highly sophisticated experimental work and profound theoretical insight into the phenomena he observed. Dr. Priestley applied the fluorescence and dielectric techniques to thin films. By developing different stacking orders, he was able to distinguish between free surface and constraining layer effects. In this way, he decisively proved the nanoscale effect, and convincingly explained the origins of it. His work can be considered as a scientific breakthrough, and provides a sound theoretical basis for further innovations in polymer nano-engineering.».

The second prize was awarded for the thesis entitled «Layer-by-layer assembly of nanostructured composites: mechanics and applications» by Paul Podsiadlo, who impressed the jury «with a new challenge in the design of composite materials: How to enhance optical and mechanical properties through layer-by-layer assembly of polymers and nanostructures. His ultrastrong transparent clay
nanocomposites are an excellent example of a new material combining the best of the polymer and the nanostructure worlds. His development of exponential layer-by-layer assembly further improves an important tool for scalable composite systems.».

Edwin P. Chan was awarded a prize for his thesis entitled «Adhesion of patterned polymer interfaces». The jury appreciated that «in his thesis work, Dr. Chan was inspired by organised roughness and adhesion of nature-created structures and materials. Dr. Chan’s thesis was stimulated by the goal not just to maximize or minimize interfacial strength, but to be able to “control adhesion”. This can be done by using patterned interfaces. First he developed methods to gain well-defined patterns. He demonstrated surface wrinkling through swelling experiments on thin films, which are generally applicable to a broad range of material systems. The strong combination of smart experiments and models was identified by the jury to give this award».

The members of the academic jury are on the staff of internationally acclaimed universities or institutions, have many years of experience in the field of materials and plastic sciences and supervise numerous doctoral candidates annually. The four members of the academic jury are:

- **Professor Dr. Volker Altstädt**  
  *Director of the Department of Polymer Engineering / University of Bayreuth, Germany*

- **Professor Dr. Martin Gruebele**  
  *James R. Eiszner Professor of Chemistry, Professor of Physics, and Professor of Biophysics and Computational Biology / University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, USA*

- **Professor Dr. Jan-Anders Månson**  
  *Laboratory of Polymer and Composite Technology / École Polytechnique Fédérale de Lausanne, Switzerland*

- **Professor Dr. Ignaas Verpoest**  
  *Professor in Composite Materials at the Department of Metallurgy and Materials Engineering and President of the Leuven Materials Research Centre / Katholieke Universiteit Leuven, Belgium*

Professor Dr. Paolo Ermanni, ETH Zurich, Centre of Structure Technologies, presided at the event as a non-jury member.

The number of international entries received was very encouraging (more than 50), and especially also the quality of the papers submitted. The launch of the international Quadrant Award is intended to foster talent worldwide and facilitate access to industry for plastics scientists and engineers after completion of their academic training. Quadrant also aims to make a contribution in building a bridge between industry and academia. The next Quadrant Award is planned to be conferred in 2011.

The award presented was designed by the internationally distinguished Swiss artist Beat Zoderer. The design of the artist's multiple is based on the artist's idea that thermoplastics can be worked in the liquid state. Liquid plastic dripping on to an object such as paper or a panel forms drops of different sizes, which also resemble the emergence of innovative ideas in the form of «drops of imagination». Beat Zoderer has translated this idea into a relief landscape of circles. The base material used was a sheet of Ertacetal C blue 50 plastic produced at Quadrant's plant in Tielt, Belgium.
Quadrant, a global leader in high-performance polymer materials in the form of semi-finished and finished products with locations in 19 countries, generates annual sales of up to CHF 800 million. The specialty engineering thermoplastics and composites manufactured and marketed by more than 2'400 employees worldwide are superior in performance to metals and other materials and are used in a growing number of applications, primarily in the capital goods industry. Together with leaders in a wide range of customer markets, Quadrant is continuously developing new areas of application. Thanks to its clear strategic orientation and focus, Quadrant has generated substantial added value for customers and shareholders since it was established in 1996 and is well prepared to continue expanding its market leadership in future.

Further information can be obtained from:

René-Pierre Müller, Chief Executive Officer rene.mueller@qplas.com
Quadrant AG, Talstrasse 70, CH-8001 Zurich
Phone +41 (0)44 213 66 66, Fax +41 (0)44 213 66 99
www.quadrantplastics.com
The winners of the Quadrant Award 2009 (left to right): Dr. Paul Podsiadlo (2nd prize), University of Michigan, USA; Dr. Rodney Priestley (1st prize), Northwestern University, USA; Dr. Edwin P. Chan (3rd prize), University of Massachusetts Amherst, USA.

Group photograph of all candidates, the academic jury, the event chairman and the organizers (from left to right). Seated: candidates Dr. Mariya Spasova (Bulgarian Academy of Sciences), Dr. Paul Podsiadlo (winner of the 2nd prize), Dr. Rodney Priestley (1st prize), Dr. Edwin P. Chan (3rd prize) and Dr. Stefan Loher (ETH Zurich). Standing: Dr. René-Pierre Müller (CEO Quadrant), Dr. Christopher J. Bettinger (candidate, Massachusetts Institute of Technology), Prof. Dr. Martin Gruebele, University of Illinois, USA, Prof. Dr. Paolo Ermanni, ETH Zurich (Event Chairman), Prof. Dr. Jan-Anders Månsén, École Polytechnique Fédérale de Lausanne, Switzerland, Prof. Dr. Ignas Verpoest, Katholieke Universiteit Leuven, Belgium, Prof. Dr. Volker Altstädt, Universität Bayreuth, Germany, Astrid Keller (Quadrant).

The Quadrant Award 2009 designed by distinguished Swiss artist Beat Zoderer.

High-resolution pictures can be ordered at: info@qplas.com