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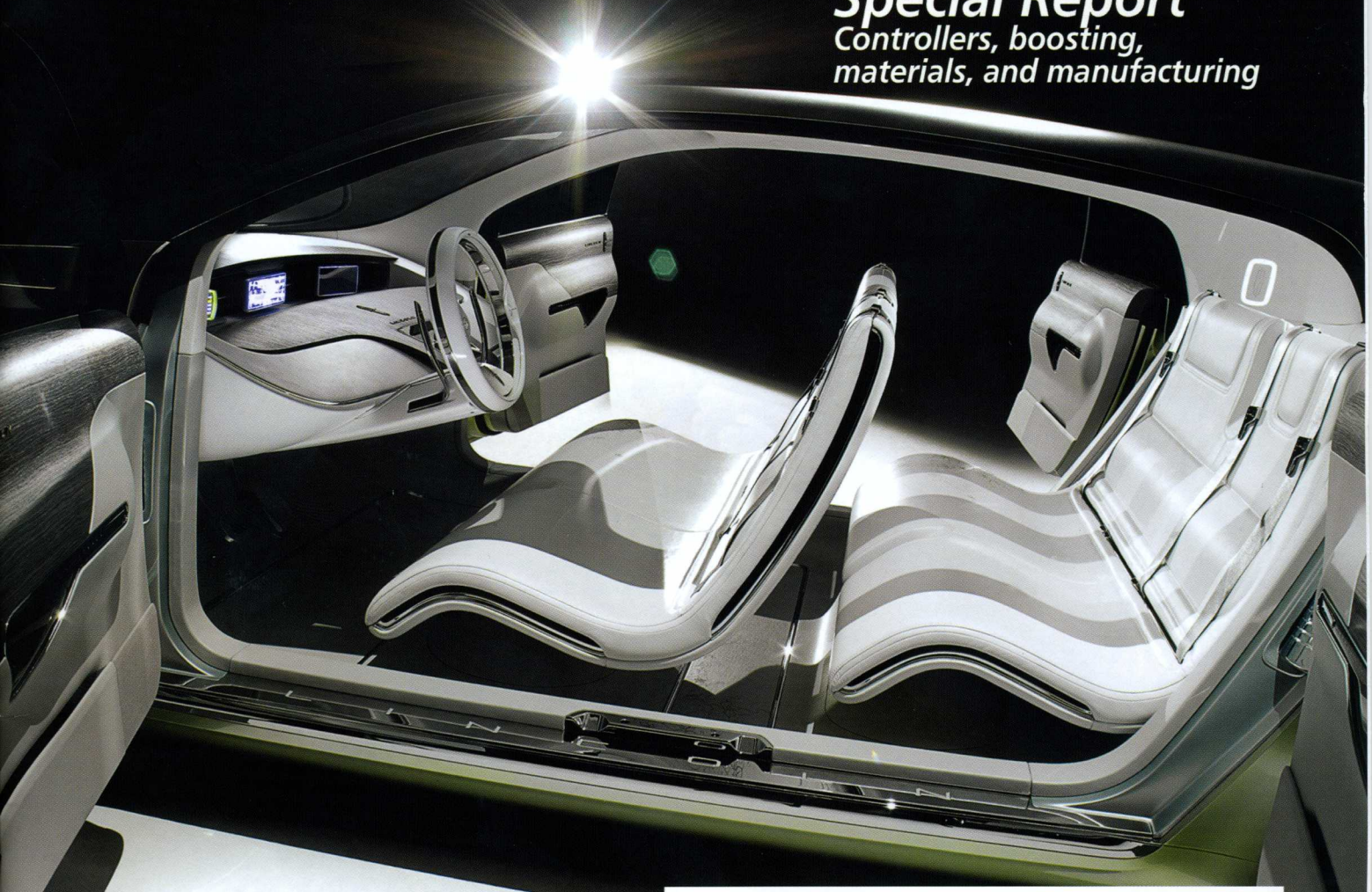
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# Innovative Thinking 101

West Virginia University professor Dr. James E. Smith issues a call for innovation as one of the central themes of his term as SAE's 2009 President.

by Matt Monaghan



Dr. James E. Smith, SAE International's 2009 President, has been a professor at West Virginia University since 1984.

With 26 U.S. patents to his credit—and another 15 pending—it is clear that innovation is a concept very important to West Virginia University (WVU) professor Dr. James E. Smith. With patents covering a wide range of devices, from non-invasive medical diagnostic equipment to high-lift helicopters to energy-production technologies—and even protective cases for stuffed collectibles—inventing is also Smith's self-described favorite hobby.

That penchant for thinking outside the box is something that Smith is looking forward to bringing to his term as SAE International's 2009 President.

"We need to reward [innovation], we need to train for it, we need to recognize it, we need to encourage it, and we need to help foster it," Smith said. "And if we do that, we increase the creativity of our population worldwide and we start looking at solving problems as opposed to avoiding crises."

Smith becomes just the fourth SAE President to come from academia, and he has chosen innovation as one of the central themes of his term.

Innovation plays a large part in Smith's duties at WVU,

