

AAPEX 2026 Spices Up the Auto Aftermarket with Celebrity Appearances

Stars familiar with fans of the NWSL, NBA, NASCAR, MLB, NFL, and Hollywood, will make public appearances and sign autographs at the event in Las Vegas

LAS VEGAS, NV, UNITED STATES, July 21, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Some stars will be out at the 2026 Automotive Aftermarket Products Expo (AAPEX) this coming November. AAPEX announced today that multiple celebrities will make guest appearances at the show this year. The star-studded lineup includes several high-profile celebrities who will participate in photo opportunities and sign autographs for attendees over the course of the show.



"We've put a lot of effort into improving the business benefits of AAPEX for exhibitors and attendees over the years: informative sessions, high-quality hands-on training, and a better-organized exhibit hall layout that benefits both exhibitors and attendees," said Auto Care Association Vice President of Trade Shows and

Community Engagement Mark Bogdansky. "This year, we are taking things a step further with a variety of entertainment activities, including inviting several major celebrities to the show."

“

A common theme between these celebrities and the automotive aftermarket is that they are all competitors who found a way to win."

*Liz Goad, vice president of
Events with MEMA
Aftermarket Suppliers*

Celebrities who have accepted invitations to attend AAPEX 2026 include the following:

- Mia Hamm (NWSL). With two World Championships and two Olympic Gold Medals, Hamm was hailed by ESPN as the greatest female athlete of the past four decades. Her

17-year professional soccer career started at just 15 years old, when she played in a match for the U.S. Senior Squad in 1987.

- Grant Hill (NBA). After a 19-year career in the NBA, the seven-time NBA All-Star and two-time NCAA Champion transitioned to the business world. In addition to his broadcasting roles with CBS Sports, Turner Sports and NBATV, Hill currently serves as the Vice Chairman of the Atlanta Hawks and Managing Director of the USA Basketball Men's National Team.

- Jimmie Johnson (NASCAR). A seven-time NASCAR Cup Series champion, including five titles in a row from 2006 to 2010. He was named AP Male Athlete of the Year in 2009 and was inducted into the NASCAR Hall of Fame in 2024. Johnson raced in the INDYCAR series and was named Indianapolis 500 Rookie of the Year in 2022. An avid athlete, he finished the Boston Marathon in 3:09:07 and only hours after completing a 400-mile race at the Richmond Raceway in 2019.

- Randy Johnson (MLB). This National Baseball Hall of Fame inductee is best known to his fans as "The Big Unit." He was one of the most successful and prolific pitchers in professional baseball history. Johnson played for six teams, won five Cy Young Awards, and earned a spot in 10 All-Star Game appearances.

- Barry Sanders (NFL). This Oklahoma State University running back won the Heisman Trophy in 1988, before being drafted to the NFL by the Detroit Lions the following year. Sanders played in 10 Pro Bowl Seasons for the team, averaging 1,500 rushing yards per season, and still holds 10 NFL records. Today, he supports several charities and is involved in dozens of businesses, including the Barry Sanders Auto Group and El Car Wash.

There will be at least one celebrity guest appearance each full day of the show – and as many as four on Thursday – the last day of the show. A schedule of celebrity activities will be published on the AAPEX website when the show draws closer this fall.



Today's announcement comes on the heels of a prior announcement noting the winningest coach in NCAA history, Coach Mike Krzyzewski, will be the headline speaker at the [AAPEX 2026 Keynote Breakfast](#). Under his leadership, the Duke University Blue Devils won five NCAA championship games – and the U.S. Olympic Basketball Team won three gold medals.

"A common theme between these celebrities and the automotive aftermarket is that they are all competitors who found a way to win," said MEMA Aftermarket Suppliers Vice President of Events Liz Goad. "Automotive aftermarket professionals have good reason to attend the show for business purposes, but we're still aiming to improve the experience every year; AAPEX 2026 will be a tradeshow nobody wants to miss."

Continuously improving the AAPEX show experience

AAPEX has earned a reputation as a tradeshow where business gets done. Post-[show surveys of exhibitors and attendees](#) demonstrate that finding new products or innovations, identifying new suppliers and strengthening relationships with existing partners are consistently among the top reasons people come to the show.

The tradeshow organizers, the Auto Care Association and MEMA Aftermarket Suppliers, have leaned into this theme. AAPEX recently revealed show enhancements such as the addition of the AAPEX Forum, which optimizes the show's exhibitor segmentation. This helps buyers and exhibitors to conduct more meetings efficiently, over the course of the show.

These announcements are just a hint of the improvements AAPEX is rolling out. Attendees who walk into AAPEX 2026 will experience a modern look and feel that complements this year's theme: "Where the industry gets real." They'll also find museum-style vignettes showcasing famous cars, show signage that mimics standard U.S. highway signs, daily prizes, including a brand-new Ford F-150, and celebrity appearances every single day at the show.

Registration information

Registration is open for automotive aftermarket professionals interested in attending; [register here](#). The registration fee to attend AAPEX 2026 is \$75 until Sep. 25th – and \$100 thereafter.

Vocational students and members of the media, may be eligible to register for a complimentary pass to AAPEX.

About AAPEX

AAPEX unites the \$2.3 trillion global automotive aftermarket industry that keeps the world's 1.6 billion vehicles safely on the road. The annual tradeshow attracts thousands of exhibitors and tens of thousands of attendees from around the world to find new products and innovations, expand business relationships, and advance their team's skills with world-class technical and business training sessions.

With more than 60 years of history, AAPEX is one of the longest-running and largest automotive aftermarket events in the Western Hemisphere. It consistently ranks in the top 1% of U.S. trade shows by leading trade publications, including the Gold 100 Honorees by Trade Show Executive (TSE) and the Top 250 Trade Show List by Trade Show Network News (TSNN).

AAPEX is co-produced by MEMA Aftermarket Suppliers and the Auto Care Association.

Frank Strong

for AAPEX

+1 202-352-5920

[email us here](#)

Visit us on social media:

[LinkedIn](#)

[Instagram](#)

[Facebook](#)

[YouTube](#)

[X](#)

[Other](#)

This press release can be viewed online at: <https://www.einpresswire.com/article/928107912>

EIN Presswire's priority is source transparency. We do not allow opaque clients, and our editors try to be careful about weeding out false and misleading content. As a user, if you see something we have missed, please do bring it to our attention. Your help is welcome. EIN Presswire, Everyone's Internet News Presswire™, tries to define some of the boundaries that are reasonable in today's world. Please see our Editorial Guidelines for more information.

© 1995-2026 Newsmatics Inc. All Right Reserved.