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MAINE TECHNOLOGY INSTITUTE ANNOUNCES \$1,202,811 IN FOUR NEW AWARDS TO BOOST MAINE'S HIGH-POTENTIAL CLUSTERS

(BRUNSWICK, MAINE) – The Maine Technology Institute (MTI) approved four new awards from its Cluster Initiative Program (CIP) for collaborative projects that boost Maine's high-potential technology-enabled clusters. CIP awards support the success and growth of Maine businesses by funding joint work of companies, service providers, research laboratories and educational institutions and expanding the infrastructure that helps them to thrive. This round of CIP awards leveraged \$1,415,197 in private sector matching contributions to the projects.

Cluster Initiative Program awards were issued for projects supporting Maine's Agriculture, Aquaculture, Fisheries and Food Production cluster and Maine's Composites and Advanced Materials cluster. Award recipients include:

- The Maine Grain Alliance of Skowhegan received \$50,000 for a feasibility and planning project to inventory existing grain drying and storage infrastructure along convenient trade routes, and research technologies and financing options to improve this infrastructure;
- FocusMaine, in partnership with Gulf of Maine Research Institute and the Maine Aquaculture Association, received \$219,600 to develop and maintain business planning tools to support efficient growth and unlock access to traditional financing for aquaculturists, and to create an open source small business resource, building on Maine's competitive advantages;
- The Midcoast Regional Redevelopment Authority of Brunswick received \$495,165 to develop TechPlace's Shared Composites Layup Room and Paint Booth for use by TechPlace tenants and other scale-up composites companies; and
- University of Maine Advanced Structures and Composites Center received \$438,046 for the establishment of a Smart Materials Industry Consortium and Smart Materials Lab in Orono.

"These projects leverage significant support and leadership from the private sector and will advance and stimulate economic activity in two strong clusters in the State of Maine," said Brian Whitney, MTI's President. "They will enhance collaboration between public and private sector entities, improve our innovation infrastructure to increase Maine's competitiveness, and help emerging companies gain access to capital that will lead to the development of new businesses, products, processes, skilled workforce, and jobs."

For more information on MTI funding programs, please visit www.mainetechnology.org.

MTI is a publicly financed, private, nonprofit organization created by the Legislature in 1999 to stimulate research and development activity leading to the commercialization of new products, processes and services in the state's seven targeted technology sectors. MTI programs are either loans, equity investments, or grants designed to enhance the competitive position of those sectors and increase the likelihood that one or more of these sectors will support clusters of industrial activity and create quality jobs across Maine.