NEWS RELEASE

Media Contact:
Hannah Jay
IACMI-The Composites Institute
hjay@iacmi.org

IACMI-The Composites Institute is Driving Innovation and Job Growth in Tennessee

Knoxville, Tenn., July 23, 2018 – The Institute for Advanced Composites Manufacturing Innovation (IACMI), a 170+ member consortium headquartered in Knoxville, Tennessee and committed to increasing domestic production capacity and manufacturing jobs across the U.S. composites industry, is approaching the three year mark since its inaugural Members Meeting launch in June of 2015. This week, IACMI will host its seventh semi-annual Members Meeting in Knoxville, Tennessee consisting of presentations on the latest technology projects and advancements, six facility tours, and networking opportunities for the 300+ attendees representing more than 100 IACMI industry member companies across the United States.

IACMI-The Composites Institute is driving innovation and job growth in the Tennessee composites industry by partnering with organizations such as Oak Ridge National Laboratory and the University of Tennessee, Knoxville, and collaborating with industry leaders from IACMI Tennessee members including Local Motors, RMX Technologies, Techmer PM, Magnum Venus products (MVP), LeMond Composites, and major OEMs including Volkswagen and Nissan. Many other IACMI members with headquarters in other states are increasing their respective presence in the volunteer state to have closer access to the research, development, and innovation assets of the region. Two weeks ago, Oshkosh, an IACMI member collaborating with the institute on large research and development projects, announced its plan to locate a manufacturing facility expected to add 300 jobs in Tennessee.

“IACMI is creating an ecosystem in Tennessee between industry, academia, and government to develop innovative materials and deploy cutting-edge technologies to impact manufacturing and energy efficiency in automotive and other industries,” attests Tennessee Department of Economic and Community Development Commissioner, Bob Rolfe. “In turn, IACMI is not just attracting quality manufacturing jobs to Tennessee, but it’s also training people for the jobs of the future.” In the last five years, Tennessee has seen a 26.5% growth in advanced manufacturing jobs, which far exceeds the national 4.3%.

Year three for The Composites Institute has been full of promising milestones and accomplishments as it continues to bridge the gap between research in the lab and commercialization in markets. In December of 2017, a few of IACMI’s 50+ interns designed, built, and tested a composite snow sled prototype at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville allowing students to work alongside industry partners and learn about the latest developments in fiber placement, characterization, and molding processes. In addition to workforce training, over the last year, IACMI kicked off more than twenty technical projects ranging from the development of composite automotive parts for lightweighting to thermoplastic composite development for wind turbine blades.
By working with valued research and development partners to industry, process and material innovations hit the market sooner. “Our headquarters are here because we realize the unique capabilities in this region make Tennessee a hotbed for innovation,” explains John A. Hopkins, IACMI CEO. “IACMI is serving the community by providing production-relevant environments for innovation, a supply chain based framework for decision making, and workforce development that directly supports the advanced polymer composites industry. Through implementation of new materials and faster processes, and realization of lower life cycle costs, IACMI will make the US a leader in the manufacture of these strategic materials and accelerate the growth of their markets.”

Since its inception in 2015, IACMI continues to host semi-annual Members Meetings, with each meeting hosted in one of IACMI’s five core partner states of Tennessee, Colorado, Michigan, Ohio, and Indiana. Knoxville Mayor Madeline Rogero and Dr. Stacey Patterson, vice president for research, outreach, and economic development for the University of Tennessee helped make the official institute announcement three years ago at this consortium meeting and both will be back to provide remarks for the return of this significant event. University of Tennessee, Knoxville Chancellor Wayne Davis and current Mayor of Knox County, Tim Burchett, are also supporting the event and providing remarks on Thursday morning. This meeting, held July 24-27, 2018 in IACMI’s home state of Tennessee, will showcase the innovative capabilities of IACMI’s Tennessee partners, discuss new developments in low-cost carbon fiber, and highlight current technology projects in recycling, prototyping, materials development, and tooling technologies. The meeting features a two hour session on one of IACMI’s flagship technical projects led by Ford and Dow to enable high volume manufacturing of lightweight automotive components. The session will review project objectives from an industry perspective and technical gaps in a real business case, covering topics such as performance and crash testing, and opportunities for broad implementation.

About IACMI-The Composites Institute: The Institute for Advanced Composites Manufacturing Innovation (IACMI), managed by the Collaborative Composite Solutions Corporation (CCS), is a partnership of industry, universities, national laboratories, and federal, state and local governments working together to benefit the nation’s energy and economic security by sharing existing resources and co-investing to accelerate innovative research and development in the advanced composites field. CCS is a not-for-profit organization established by The University of Tennessee Research Foundation. The national Manufacturing USA institute is supported by a $70 million commitment from the U.S. Department of Energy’s Advanced Manufacturing Office, and over $180 million committed from IACMI’s partners. Find out more at IACMI.org.