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**Contact:**  
Betsy Biemann  
Maine Technology Institute  
(207) 582-4790, x202  
bbiemann@mainetechnology.org

**Maine Technology Institute Awards \$7.25 Million to  
Maine Companies, Universities and Nonprofit Research Groups**  
*~Investing in Maine's Innovation Economy~*

**AUGUSTA, Maine** – At a press conference called by Governor Baldacci, Maine Technology Institute (MTI) President Betsy Biemann today announced that the MTI Board of Directors has approved a total of \$7.25 million of Maine Technology Asset Fund awards to 10 organizations across Maine. The awards will be matched by over \$13 million in additional funding for the projects. Governor John E. Baldacci, Legislators from the Appropriations and the Business Research and Economic Development Committees, Maine Department of Economic and Community Development Commissioner Thaxter Trafton, and a number of representatives from the organizations receiving the awards attended the State House event.

Opening the press conference, Governor Baldacci stated, “We know that investing in research and development is one of the most powerful ways to boost Maine’s per capita income. In the mid 1990’s, Maine started on a course to invest in our key strengths, in our traditional industries like forestry, agriculture and aquaculture as well as our emerging industries like composite materials and biotechnology. My administration has continued to champion making investments in Maine’s technology sectors in order to build on our strengths and build high-potential clusters of economic activity. In the first two rounds, MTI awarded \$45.6 million of MTAF funding to 25 projects currently under way. MTAF awards under contract have already leveraged more than \$69 million in matching funds with increasing investments flowing as the projects advance.”

As she announced the awardees, Betsy Biemann, President of Maine Technology Institute explained that “In November 2007 and again in June 2010, Maine committed to make a bold investment in our entrepreneurs, researchers and in the talents and ingenuity of our workforce. These awards recognize the work of the innovative businesses and research organizations across Maine that have applied for these highly competitive funds, leveraging their awards with private investment and Federal grants, and collaborating, often across sectors, to develop new technologies and economic activity. The Maine Technology Asset Fund awards serve as a catalyst for Maine's economy by funding cutting-edge technology development in some of Maine’s most entrepreneurial companies and research organizations. We were extremely impressed with the breadth and competitiveness of the applicant pool overall, and of this group of award winners.”

This third round of MTAF awards cover projects located from Auburn to Fort Fairfield and Portland to Eastport in Maine's seven targeted technology sectors. These MTAF awardees will help to develop technologies that build on Maine strengths such as aquaculture and agriculture as well as emerging clusters such as renewable energy, high performance computing, composites and precision manufacturing and biotechnology.

"These are highly competitive awards," continued Biemann. "The reviewer panel scored and then rank-ordered applications according to the following criteria: Economic Growth and Impact, Scientific or Engineering Merit and Feasibility, Team and Institutional Merit and Commitment, Relevance to Maine's Innovation Economy Needs and Collaboration."

DECD Commissioner Thaxter Trafton added that the applications build on Maine's strengths and demonstrate the potential of collaboration among Maine technology developers to foster economic development across the state. The Commissioner also commented, that the MTAF program "increases Maine's world-class research, development and commercialization across the state, which returns over \$14 in the Maine economy for every \$1 awarded.

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 technology-intensive sectors. Programs are designed to enhance the competitive position of those sectors and increase the likelihood that one or more of the sectors will support clusters of industrial activity and create quality jobs across Maine. More about MTI at: [www.mainetechnology.org](http://www.mainetechnology.org).

The list of award recipients with a brief description of their projects follows.

## **AWARD RECIPIENTS FOR ROUND THREE OF THE MAINE TECHNOLOGY ASSET FUND:**

**University of Maine, Orono**

### **ADVANCED BIOMECHANICS LABORATORY FOR INJURY REDUCTION AND REHABILITATION**

**Award Amount: Up to \$533,300**

**Sector: Biotechnology**

MTAF funds will be used to establish a laboratory for the development of high tech products that result in the reduction of injury due to head impact, injury stabilization, vibration mitigation during emergency evacuation, novel assistive fitness and rehabilitation equipment for persons suffering from injury related disabilities. The proposed laboratory plan is a result of University of Maine's cooperative efforts with Alba-Technic of Arundel, Rynel of Wiscasset, Astos Innovations of Newburgh, and LifeFlight of Maine. The laboratory will enable the development of unique and novel products by linking advanced research and testing facilities to Maine businesses to accelerate prototype development, testing, and commercialization.

**Gulf of Maine Research Institute, Portland**

### **COMMUNITY-BASED RESEARCH TO SUPPORT THE MAINE LOBSTER INDUSTRY**

**Award Amount: Up to \$532,550**

**Sector: Aquaculture and Marine Technology**

The Gulf of Maine Research Institute (GMRI) will use its MTAF award to purchase acoustic sonar systems and outfit them on lobster boats distributed across Maine's coast. The technology will enable scientists from GMRI and state and federal agencies to work collaboratively with the lobster industry to provide fishery managers the first accurate assessment of herring populations in Maine's coastal waters. This new capacity to make informed decisions when setting harvest levels for herring will be a boon to Maine's lobster industry, which depends on a steady and reasonably priced supply of herring for bait.

**Biovation LLC, Boothbay**

### **LABORATORY FACILITIES FOR WOUND CARE PRODUCTS**

**Award Amount: Up to \$125,000**

**Sector: Precision Manufacturing**

Biovation LLC will use MTAF funds for the building of a laboratory facility to conduct testing and product development for the commercialization of advanced wound care products (wound dressings); inclusive of the infection control chemistry and the encapsulation of mentioned chemistry onto roll-good substrate (dressing). The goal of the created lab facility is to have a controlled environment in which various chemistries can be compounded and formulated and physical testing of those formulations be carried out. The implementation of the lab facility will result in high-tech, high-wage jobs and contribute to Biovation's plan to play an important role in the precision manufacturing sectors, specifically in the medical device area.

**University of Maine, Orono**

**FISHLAB: FISHERIES INNOVATION, SUSTAINABILITY & HEALTH LAB**

**Award Amount: Up to \$600,000**

**Sector: Aquaculture and Marine Technology**

MTAF funds will be used for the FishLab: Fisheries Innovation, Sustainability & Health Lab construction, with a wet lab with two distinct units containing isolation aquaria. The proposed module will be Maine's first aquatic Bio-Safety Level (BSL) II facility, with BSL III containment capabilities for the study of fish health pathogens, and will be used by both University and industry partners. This project will advance research, development and commercialization related to the aquaculture as well as the commercial and recreational fishery industries in Maine, the USA and internationally.

**University of Maine, Orono**

**COMMERCIALIZATION OF NEW TECHNOLOGIES FOR ANIMAL DISEASE SURVEILLANCE**

**Orono Award Amount: Up to \$497,392**

**Sector: Advanced Technology for Forestry and Agriculture**

MTAF funds will enable Maine's Biotechnological companies to use the University of Maine's Witter Center as a field testing site for development of diagnostic kits for the global market, and will equip Maine veterinarians with the necessary technology to track animal diseases of economic importance.

**University of Maine, Orono and Fort Fairfield**

**BIOMASS ENGINEERED FUEL**

**Award Amount: Up to \$1,659,655**

**Sector: Advanced Technology for Forestry and Agriculture**

The University of Maine Cooperative Extension and the Process Development Center will use MTAF funds to construct a grass pellet demonstration facility in Aroostook County that will convert bioenergy crops grown on fallow farmland into novel solid biomass fuel products for commercial and residential heating applications. The award will also enable the acquisition and installation of research equipment to support energy crop development and selection, pellet quality testing and boiler efficiency testing. This project has the potential to demonstrate a high value product for the nearly 400,000 acres of underutilized farmland across the state, catalyze related economic activity and displace a significant fraction of home heating oil consumption in the State of Maine.

**ORPC Maine, LLC, Portland and Eastport**

**TIDGEN™ POWER SYSTEM COMMERCIALIZATION PROJECT**

**Award Amount: Up to \$1,200,000**

**Sector: Environmental Technology**

MTAF funds will facilitate the advancement of ORPC Maine's TidGen™ Power System from beta pre-commercial status to a grid-connected and revenue generating commercial tidal energy product for use in water depths of up to 150 feet. The TidGen™ Power System Project is expected to be the first in the United States to distribute tidal-generated electricity through a utility grid and follows ORPC's successful generation of grid-compatible power from tidal currents at its Cobscook Bay sites in Eastport and Lubec, Maine.

**University of Maine and the University of Maine System, Orono**  
**CIDER: CYBERINFRASTRUCTURE INVESTMENT FOR DEVELOPMENT,**  
**ECONOMIC GROWTH, AND RESEARCH**  
**Award Amount: up to \$250,000**  
**Sector: Information Technology**

MTAF funds will be used for the CIDER (Cyberinfrastructure Investment for Development, Economic Growth, and Research) project creates a high performance computing resource for economic development, research, and education for the state of Maine. This supercomputer will be housed at and operated by the University of Maine for use by Maine businesses and research institutions. Rather than buying separate computer resources, businesses and research units will add new computational nodes to help expand and refresh the shared resource. The result is a large, high performance computing system that benefits Maine businesses, trains the future generation of information technology professionals, provides more computing power at a lower cost than otherwise would be attainable, and provides a competitive advantage for Maine businesses.

**The Jackson Laboratory, Bar Harbor**  
**COMPLEX WORKFLOW MANAGEMENT: AN ENGINEERED SOLUTION**  
**Award Amount: Up to \$900,000**  
**Sector: Biotechnology**

MTAF funds will be used to re-engineer the workflow in JAX Transgenic Genotyping Services to allow for greater throughput, accommodating the rapid increase in the volume of genotyping services requested at JAX. The result will be faster and more accurate genotyping services and the capacity to offer the service externally. It provides the opportunity for product development with collaborator Lanco Assembly Systems (Westbrook) and new market opportunities for Lanco.

**Packgen, Auburn**  
**THE E-PACK DRUM: MANUFACTURING AN ENVIRONMENTALLY-FRIENDLY**  
**ALTERNATIVE TO THE 55 GALLON STEEL DRUM**  
**Award Amount: Up to \$950,000**  
**Sector: Composites Materials Technology**

Packgen, an Auburn manufacturer of specialty industrial packaging solutions, has developed an innovative new product that replaces 55 gallon steel drums. Using Packgen's proprietary technology the E-Pack drum, weighing only 12 pounds, rolls up when empty reducing the carbon footprint by a factor of 9:1. MTAF funds will be used to implement full production of the E-Pack Drum, creating approximately 120 jobs.

For more information on the award recipients and their projects, please visit Maine Technology Institute's Web site, [www.mainetechnology.org](http://www.mainetechnology.org).

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