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LIFT and Conexus Indiana to Provide Students with Work and Learn Opportunities in Lightweight Manufacturing

INDIANAPOLIS, Indiana - Lightweight Innovations for Tomorrow (LIFT) and Conexus Indiana today announced the *Work & Learn in Indiana: Career Exploration in Lightweight Metals Manufacturing* program to provide students with real-world experience and the opportunity to explore careers at local manufacturing companies.

“Demand for skilled workers in lightweighting-related jobs is skyrocketing, with companies in Indiana posting over 50,000 related jobs in 2015 alone,” said Larry Brown, executive director, LIFT. “The rapidly aging advanced manufacturing workforce, paired with increasing employer demand, requires a more concerted effort in developing the talent pipeline, and this program will help do that.”

The program builds on Conexus Indiana’s pioneering Conexus Interns model, which, with LIFT support, will expand throughout the state to include an additional 100 students. The additional students, designated as LIFT interns, will participate in a six-week paid internship with manufacturers across Indiana starting in June 2016. The interns will gain on-the-job training with 38 Indiana companies specializing in automotive, aerospace and lightweight metal applications.

“LIFT interns in Indiana will have the opportunity to explore lightweight manufacturing careers and develop ‘people and workplace’ skills in addition to manufacturing technical skills, all while cultivating foundational relationships with manufacturers throughout the state,” said Emily DeRocco, education and workforce director, LIFT. “Additionally, manufacturers will have an extended, first-hand look at the state’s emerging pool of talent.”

Conexus Indiana will lead the efforts to provide work-and-learn opportunities in partnership with LIFT. The project will be implemented in close coordination with the Indiana Department of Workforce Development and the Indiana State Workforce Innovation Council as they launch a concurrent effort to establish a statewide framework for innovative work-and-learn models in the state.

“In partnering with LIFT, we will help dispel myths about what is possible through work-and-learn models, while encouraging young Hoosiers to consider long-term, rewarding

careers in manufacturing,” said Claudia Cummings, Vice President of Workforce and Education, Conexus Indiana.

The core team will partner with education leaders from Purdue University, Ivy Tech Community College, Vincennes University and Indiana high schools.

The 38 participating companies include: Allison Transmission; BAE; Batesville Products; Batesville Tool & Die; Blasdel Enterprises; Bulk Truck & Transport Service, Inc.; Busche; CalTherm; Dana Holding Corporation; Elgin Fastener Group; GKN Sinter Metals; Greenville Technology, Inc.; Hayes International; Hitachi Powdered Metals; Hoosier Pattern, Inc.; IMMI; Jasper Engine & Transmission; Kessington, LLC; Koch Enterprises; Littler Diecast Corporation; Magna Powertrain; Marion Manufacturing; MSP Aviation; Mursix Corporation; Ottenweller Company; Precise Mold & Plate; Raybestos; Riverside MFG, LLC; Rolls-Royce; Subaru of Indiana Automotive; STARK Industries/JWS Machine; Super ATV LLC; Tech Castings LLC; Tru-Flex LLC; TS Tech Indiana, LLC; Ultra Electronics; USSI; Valeo; and Wabash National.

For information about the *Work & Learn in Indiana: Career Exploration in Lightweight Metals Manufacturing* program, visit www.lift.technology or contact LIFT Education & Workforce Director Emily DeRocco at ederocco@lift.technology.

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ABOUT LIFT

Lightweight Innovations For Tomorrow (LIFT) is a public-private partnership that will develop and deploy advanced lightweight materials manufacturing technologies and programs to prepare the workforce. The LIFT region includes 5 states: Michigan, Ohio, Indiana, Kentucky and Tennessee.

LIFT is operated by the American Lightweight Materials Manufacturing Innovation Institute (ALMMII) and was selected through a competitive process led by the U.S. Department of Defense under the Lightweight and Modern Metals Manufacturing Innovation (LM3I) solicitation issued by the U.S. Navy's Office of Naval Research. LIFT is one of the founding institutes in the National Network for Manufacturing Innovation, a federal initiative to create regional hubs to accelerate the development and adoption of cutting-edge manufacturing technologies.

ABOUT CONEXUS INDIANA

Conexus Indiana is an initiative to capitalize on emerging opportunities in advanced manufacturing and logistics, aligning resources and expertise to make Indiana a leader in advanced manufacturing. Conexus Indiana is the catalyst to position Indiana as the recognized global leader in advanced manufacturing and logistics. We are building industry partners and exploring new market opportunities, preparing Hoosiers to take advantage of manufacturing and logistics careers, and promoting a better understanding of the importance of these sectors to our economic future.

Conexus Indiana is focused on issues like workforce development, exploring new market opportunities and building research and supplier networks to help Indiana manufacturing and logistics firms succeed.