



For Immediate Release  
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## **Innovative Entrepreneurs across Maine are Big Winners of Maine Technology Institute's Latest Round of Seed Grant Awards**

**Gardiner**, Maine – The Maine Technology Institute (MTI) Board of Directors recently awarded Seed Grants to 18 innovative entrepreneurs and companies across Maine to advance their pioneering new technologies. Nearly \$203,000 was awarded by MTI leveraging more than \$351,000 from other sources. Entrepreneurs in this latest round represent technologies in the areas of aquaculture, biotech, environmental technology, advanced technologies in forestry and agriculture, information technology and precision manufacturing in shops, companies and labs from Bangor to Blue Hill to Boothbay to Brunswick and beyond. A complete list of March's awardees follows.

“This round of Seed Grant Awardees represents some very interesting technology innovations,” explained Betsy Biemann, President of the Maine Technology Institute. “Every two months, we award Seed Grants to people across Maine who are hard at work on new ideas and new products, some of which will grow into Maine’s next business success stories. Here, we have a front row seat to their beginnings.”

Seed Grants of up to \$12,500 are offered six times a year to support early-stage research and development activities for new products and services that lead to the market. The next deadline for application is April 15, 2010. Entrepreneurs with ideas of innovative technologies are encouraged to apply! Upcoming workshops with information about applying for Seed Grants, and MTI's Development Awards, are scheduled for March 31 from 5-7pm at the MTI offices at 405 Water Street in Gardiner and on April 1 from 9-11am at the Abromson Center on the USM Campus in Portland. A Seed Grant Webinar is scheduled for April 2 from 2-3pm for

entrepreneurs unable to attend the Gardiner or Portland workshops. Registration for the workshops or webinar is required, there is no cost. Contact MTI at 582-4790 x 206 to register.

While individual Seed Grants are capped at \$12,500, a company may be awarded a total of up to \$25,000 in multiple Seed Grants for a specific technology. Every Seed Grant requires at least a 1:1 match that can include cash, salaries, staff time, equipment and in-kind contributions directly attributable to the proposed project. Funded activities include market research, intellectual property filing, and feasibility study. All projects must fall under one of Maine's seven targeted technology sectors including advanced technologies for forestry and agriculture, aquaculture and marine technology, biotechnology, composite materials technology, environmental technology, information technology and precision manufacturing technology.

For more information, go to [www.mainetechnology.org](http://www.mainetechnology.org).

Maine Technology Institute is a publicly financed, nonprofit organization created by Maine's Legislature to stimulate research and development activity leading to the commercialization of new products, processes and services in the state's seven technology-intensive sectors.

## **March 2010 Maine Technology Institute Seed Grant Awardees**

### **Aquaculture and Marine Technology**

**Elco Precision Machining in Lewiston** will use their Seed Grant to manufacture two weed cutter systems to be used in a pilot study installing the systems on twin jet drive boats for field testing purposes.

### **Biotech**

**University of Maine in Orono** will use their Seed Grant as a technology transfer project to design, develop, and test an innovative, smart prototype robotic rowing orthosis (RRO), the first in a product line of smart robotic sports assistive devices to be commercialized and sold.

### **Environmental Technology**

**Swans Island Blankets in Northport** will use their Seed Grant to develop a prototype to solve technical challenges in scaling up their natural dye house from craft based to commercial level.

**Oceanwind Technology LLC in North Waterford** will use their Seed Grant to conduct preliminary hydrodynamic analysis of Submerged Web Foundation (SWF), a novel approach to

overcoming the challenges of making a cost-competitive deepwater foundation for offshore wind farms.

**Compost Maine LLC in Union** will use their Seed Grant for a proof of process test to provide data to assist in the design, process control practices, and permitting for our first plant conducting composting services using specific in-vessel composting technology.

**American Solartech LLC in Searsport** will use their Seed Grant to build and test a final prototype for a patented low mass, low cost wood gasifier boiler.

**JK Enterprises in Bangor** will use their Seed Grant to build and develop a prototype of a cost-effective, “green” heat engine for generating power from low-grade heat without producing greenhouse gases.

**Maine Blue Stream Power in Blue Hill** will use their Seed Grant to test blade configurations to optimize power production in their Breus Turbine, a device targeted for in-stream tidal energy production with low environmental impact.

**University of Maine in Orono** will use this Seed Grant to advance a commercial prototype and develop a commercialization strategy for a fluorescence technique that rapidly and cost-effectively quantifies individual water contaminants without prior separation steps.

### **Advanced Technologies for Forestry and Agriculture**

**Maine Coast Heritage Trust in Topsham** will use their Seed Grant to fund a feasibility study, determining the optimal approach to create a Wild Blueberry Processing Center, to bring a community wild blueberry-based value-added processing facility to Washington County, Maine and advance sustainability of the region’s small farm economy.

**Kennebec Cider Company in Winthrop** will use their Seed Grant to support the development of a commercially-viable process for using cryoconcentration to produce ice cider in Maine.

**Torrefaction Technologies USA LLC in Portland** will use their Seed Grant to research the markets and optimize its pyrolysis technology to produce activated carbon from renewable woody biomass sources to be used in water and emissions filtration and create energy dense bio-char for renewable biomass co-firing.

### **Information Technology**

**RainStorm Inc in Orono** will use this Seed Grant to rewrite the data storage mechanism and create usability features that will enable sales of FacultyStorm, a web-based software which empowers academic institutions to manage their faculty contact and biographical information, to the community and small college market across the U.S.

## **Precision Manufacturing Technology**

**Technological Innovations LLC in Sanford** will use their Seed Grant to develop, measure and test a unique energy storage device using the University of Maine's technology for producing a mesoporous nano-carbon (MNC) material from woody substrates, integrated with a conventional dielectric.

**Flagsuit LLC in Southwest Harbor** will use their Seed Grant to develop and test a new arm and wrist assembly for a manual manipulation vacuum chamber leading to commercialization.

**Environetix Technologies Corporation in Orono** will use their Seed Grant to write a business plan and prepare for an MTI Development Award proposal for the commercialization of a robust, high temperature sensor technology.

**Atayne in Brunswick** will use their Seed Grant to finalize designs, develop prototypes, and wear test an innovative athletic short product designed for high performance and comfort across multiple activities including running, cycling, hiking, and yoga.

**Biovation LLC in Boothbay** will use their Seed Grant to create and begin implementation of a sales and marketing plan for their Polylactic acid (PLA) non-woven fibers, generated from starch which are biodegradable and can be used as infection control barriers.

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