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# HIGH-PERFORMANCE Composites SOURCEBOOK 2006

Engineering & Manufacturing Solutions for Industry

COMPOSITE TECHNOLOGY



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## Indiana grant to fund carbon composite research for automotive applications - April 2006

By: Staff

Materials Innovation Technologies (MIT, Hendersonville, N.C.) announced April 17 that it is the recipient of a \$100,000 matching grant from the Indiana 21st Century Research and Technology Fund for the development of carbon fiber components for use in automobile construction. The award matched the \$100,000 grant MIT received last year from the U.S. Department of Energy's Small Business Innovation Research program. MIT will use the new funds to further develop a prototype model aimed at manufacturing and marketing lightweight, low-cost car parts that would greatly improve fuel efficiency while providing the same strength and durability of standard metal parts.

As the former president of Porvair Fuel Cell Technologies, MIT founder and president Jim Stike sees the industry moving slowly towards using fuel cells to power cars, but he says his company's primary goal is to find a cost-effective way to mold carbon-fiber composite parts. According to MIT, automaker General Motors has already built a lightweight concept car using composite materials that got more than 100 miles per gallon using a gasoline engine and 190 miles per gallon using a hybrid-electric engine. MIT's research will focus on making composite materials affordable. "In the past, expensive and unproductive processes have inhibited the use of advanced materials like carbon fiber," says



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Stike. "Our innovative molding process will allow us to use these advanced materials in a high-volume, cost-effective process."

Stike adds that the scope of his research also will expand into carbon fiber composite molding technologies that would apply, for instance, to the existing fiberglass industry. "These breakthroughs can impact other industries, like the aerospace, marine and sporting goods markets."

Materials Innovation Technologies is a business development company, formed to create and coordinate collaborative partnerships that can facilitate commercialization of emerging technologies. The company is headed by founder Jim Stike. Bill Austin is finance director; Mike Henthorn is technical director and Ed Stike, outside director. MIT is a collaborative partner and majority owner in Fort Wayne, Ind.-based Advanced Process Technologies.

For more information, contact Jim Stike at (828) 698-1330 or contact Jason Hughes at Lyster Agency at (704) 525-3937.

To learn more about the State of Indiana's 21st Century Research and Technology Fund, visit [www.21fund.org](http://www.21fund.org).

For more information on the U.S. Department of Energy's Small Business Innovation Research grants, visit [sbir.er.doe.gov/sbir](http://sbir.er.doe.gov/sbir).

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