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Third Wave Systems Announces Phase I USAF SBIR Project Award

Minneapolis, MN---Third Wave Systems announced today the receipt of a Small Business Innovative Research (SBIR) Phase I award from the United States Air Force Research Laboratories. The goal of the project, *Enabling Materials Processing Technology for Low-Cost Fabrication of Integral Bladed Rotors (IBR)*, is to demonstrate the feasibility of innovative forging and machining technologies needed by the Air Force to enable 35-50% cost reductions in the fabrication of these aircraft engine components. The success of this project will result from a coupling of Third Wave modeling technology and experience with IBR industry leaders.

Third Wave efforts will focus on the reduction of raw material consumption through the application of near-net shape forging technologies to IBR fine-grained materials. This will be followed by applying TWS' high speed machining (HSM) technologies to these materials to reduce machine cycle times, and reduce or eliminate expensive electrochemical machining (ECM) processes, resulting in lower cost IBRs that meet or exceed USAF qualification criteria.

"The materials and modeling technologies resulting from this effort will help us deliver a solution to Aerospace Engine makers which will reduce or eliminate expensive operations such as electrochemical machining. We're excited about this award," remarked Kerry Marusich, President of Third Wave Systems.

Founded in 1993, Third Wave Systems provides machining modeling software and services used by Fortune 500 aerospace and automotive companies to dramatically reduce costs in product design and manufacturing. Headquartered in Minneapolis, MN, Third Wave also has offices in Detroit, MI, and major distribution in Japan and Europe.

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