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MAYOR EMANUEL, GOVERNOR QUINN, SENATOR DURBIN AND UI LABS ANNOUNCE $10 MILLION FEDERAL FUNDING FOR DIGITAL MANUFACTURING LAB

'Adaptive Vehicle Make' Technology at Core of First Research Projects Executed by DMDII

Establishing Chicago as an Advanced Manufacturing Hub is a Key Initiative of the Plan for Economic Growth and Jobs

Mayor Rahm Emanuel, Governor Pat Quinn, Senator Dick Durbin and UI LABS today announced that the Digital Manufacturing and Design Innovation Institute (DMDII) has received $10 million in funding from the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA) to transition Adaptive Vehicle Make (AVM) manufacturing technology to U.S. industry. The AVM program focuses on the design, testing and manufacturing of complex defense systems with the ultimate goal of shortening development timelines. DARPA intends to use the DMDII as its primary method for advancing and commercializing the digital manufacturing technology developed by AVM program.

"This approach is expected to make Chicago and the nation more competitive and inspire a modern manufacturing renaissance," said Mayor Emanuel "It is a huge win for the new Digital Manufacturing Lab and for Chicago, as it shows that our efforts to establish key industries here and create opportunities for future job growth in manufacturing are already paying off."

"The Digital Lab is establishing itself as an economic driver in Chicago even before its doors are open," Senator Durbin said. "We worked so hard to bring the Lab to Illinois precisely in order to attract cutting-edge research and design like the AVM funding announced today. I know these are just the first of many innovative projects that will call Chicago home, and I look forward to the jobs and economic growth they will bring."

DARPA invests in high-risk, high-reward research and development that other government agencies are unable to do. Its AVM program consists of three primary projects: META, for designing and testing complex systems such as vehicles and airplanes; Instant Foundry Adaptive through Bits (iFAB), for imbedding information technology into manufacturing

facilities to make them adaptive to make them capable of building multiple types of products in the same factory; and Fast Adaptable Next Generation Ground Vehicle (FANG), a prototype infantry fighting vehicle for the purpose of testing AVM tools.

“The department views DARPA's investment as an important step in maturing AVM technology. This will be the first project that will demonstrate DMDI's value to bring the collective talents of government, industry, and academia together to address an important national need which will strengthen the U.S. industrial base,” said a Department of Defense spokesperson.

DMDII intends to release multiple project calls later this month soliciting proposals from joint teams of large industry, small and medium sized enterprises, universities and commercial software developers. It will also host an industry workshop in Chicago to familiarize prospective project call respondents with AVM technology and the Lab’s process for soliciting, awarding and executing research projects. Information on pending project calls and the workshop will be available in the coming weeks at www.digitallab.uilabs.org.

The Digital Manufacturing Lab seeks to establish a common “digital thread” to the entire manufacturing process, from initial concept to system retirement, so that each stage can be accomplished in less time and for less cost. As it relates to AMV, DMDII will focus on integrating the most advanced new technology into commercially available design and engineering tools, conducting further development on those tools, and helping to establish new industry standards.

“Utilizing the DMDII to transfer AVM technology to U.S. manufacturers makes perfect sense,” said Dr. Dean Bartles, Executive Director of DMDII. “Our unique position as a public-private partnership bringing together industry, academia and the government makes us an ideal candidate to serve as the necessary bridge to support and transition this valuable DARPA-derived technology.”

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