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## **Alaska Manufacturing Extension Partnership exceeds performance set by National Institute of Standards and Technology**

(March 23, 2009, Anchorage) – The Alaska Manufacturing Extension Partnership, Inc. today announced that it exceeded its performance standards in 2008 by helping clients to generate \$14.6 million in cost savings, \$11 million in new investment, and create or retain 27 jobs. The performance standards are set by the National Institute of Standards and Technology.

The Alaska Manufacturing Extension Partnership, Inc. (AMEP) is one of 59 centers located in all 50 states and Puerto Rico. Each center was created by the U.S. Department of Commerce, National Institute of Standards and Technology Manufacturing Extension Partnership (NIST MEP) to help stem the loss of American manufacturing jobs. Founded in 1901, NIST is a non-regulatory federal agency within the U.S. Department of Commerce.

“Successful manufacturing in Alaska has come a long way in the last few years and AMEP’s efforts to build this industry are beginning to see results,” says Chris Buchholdt, Alaska Manufacturing Extension Partnership Executive Director. “No other organization in Alaska is measured as strictly for performance by the U. S. Department of Commerce.”

Buchholdt explained that the manufacturing industry in Alaska has not had consistent access to technical manufacturing business development in Alaska. He said that NIST has specific quarterly measurement goals for each of the 59 centers in its network. The end result of the measurement is that manufacturers have access to the help they need to lower their costs, improve their quality and build their business.

One of AMEP’s clients, who was one of 46 finalists in the 2008 Alaska Marketplace, is Edmond Apassingok of Gambell on St. Lawrence Island. He invented a clip-on radiator fin for home baseboard heating systems. The company he created, Aksik Heat Distribution Systems, commercializes this technology. He used AMEP to help him develop a business plan, secure a patent, and work with potential manufacturers and distributors.

“A lot of people said they liked my idea,” Apassingok said. “AMEP worked with me to build up my idea into a business. We still need to do more research, development and marketing since Aksik is still a start-up. We’re working on our first test sale now to a guy in Massachusetts. The help I got through AMEP is what we in rural Alaska need to help make our ideas for a business work.”

A public and private partnership funded by the National Institute of Standards and Technology and the Alaska Department of Commerce Community and Economic Development, the Alaska Manufacturing Extension Partnership, Inc. is committed to developing the state’s economy through the provision of technical, business and economic training and assistance to Alaska’s small manufacturers and to rural Alaskans producing, marketing, and distributing Native art and other home-based manufactured products.

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