Boeing, Ford and Northwestern University To Launch Technology R&D Alliance

The Boeing Company [NYSE: BA], Ford Motor Company [NYSE: F] and Northwestern University today announced their intent to form an alliance to conduct nanotechnology research on projects of mutual interest and potential benefit to the companies' current and future products.

The agreement, which is expected to become final later this month, was announced at the dedication of the Ford Motor Company Engineering Design Center on Northwestern University's Evanston, Ill., campus.

Ford and Boeing each will provide financial support for three years, and the Northwestern University McCormick School of Engineering and Applied Science will provide administration of the alliance and office space for a full-time Ford employee who will serve as the industrial alliance coordinator.

While the initial focus of the research will be nanotechnology, other potential research areas include specialty metals, thermal materials, coatings, and sensors.

"We are committed to working with the best and brightest engineers and technologists throughout the world as part of our effort to find and develop technologies that will improve our defense, space and commercial airplane products," said Bob Krieger, president of Boeing Phantom Works, the company's advanced research and development unit. "We have benefited from working with the engineers at Ford during the past 10 years, as they have from us. We look forward to working together with both Ford and Northwestern in the future."

"Ford has a long history of research in the field of nanotechnology, and this relationship will strengthen our knowledge for the future," said Gerhard Schmidt, Ford's vice president of Research and Advanced Engineering. "We are very pleased to be working with Boeing in this alliance. They have been our long-time partner, and our joint collaboration with Northwestern University underscores just how serious we are about innovating the future together."

Earlier this year Krieger and Schmidt renewed the two companies' commitment to exchange technology, work to understand each other's technology needs and priorities, provide access to each other's talented people, and share technology and process know-how to accelerate the migration of beneficial technology into their products. Today's announcement kicks off the first joint effort between the two companies and a university.

Since 1995, the Boeing and Ford R&D organizations have shared mutually beneficial research and information -- in areas such as materials, human factors engineering, bonding, modeling and testing -- with the goal of improving Boeing's aerospace and Ford's automotive products.

Information sharing has been in such areas as friction-stir joining to improve how cars and aerospace products are manufactured; human factors modeling to help provide user-friendly interiors for aircraft and automobiles; aerodynamic development, particularly involving wind-tunnel simulations and the use of pressure-sensitive paint; software development for both fly-by-wire aircraft and drive-by wire vehicle controls; rapid prototyping; and noise, vibration and harshness engineering in efforts to reduce noise and vibration in aircraft and vehicle interiors.

Boeing Phantom Works is the advanced R&D unit of The Boeing Company. As an element of Boeing Technology, it provides advanced system solutions and innovative, breakthrough technologies to the company's business units that reduce cycle time and cost while improving the quality and performance of aerospace products and services. In addition to its own development work, Phantom Works collaborates with universities, companies, and organizations around the globe to ensure it is finding the best technology solutions the world has to offer.

Ford Motor Company, a global automotive leader based in Dearborn, Mich., manufactures and distributes automobiles in 200 markets across six continents. With nearly 325,000 employees and 110 plants worldwide, the company's core and affiliated automotive brands include Aston Martin, Ford, Jaguar, Land Rover, Lincoln, Mazda, Mercury and Volvo. Its automotive-related services include Ford Motor Credit Company.

###

For further information:
Tom Koehler
Boeing Phantom Works
Communications
206-766-2923
Thomas.J.Koehler@Boeing.com
Nick Twork
Ford Motor Company

Technology Public Affairs
313-598-0481
Ntwork1@ford.com
Chuck Loebbaka
Northwestern University
847-491-4887
c-loebbaka@northwestern.edu