

Media Relations

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Hutchinson Sealing Systems Awarded Technology Innovation Grant for Automotive Window Weatherstrips

DURHAM, N.H. — The New Hampshire Innovation Research Center (NHIRC) at the University of New Hampshire and Hutchinson Sealing Systems, Inc. (HSSI) co-funded a project to develop eco-friendly weather strips that seal retractable driver and passenger-side windows. Hutchinson, located in Newfields, manufactures vehicle weather strips for cars, trucks, and RVs as well as engineered seals used for HVAC systems, computer cabinets, and other containers.

Ronald U. Goulet, adjunct professor of mechanical engineering at UNH, is the principal investigator behind this research: “Automotive sealing options today involve costly coating processes and heavy metal materials that provide support for window sealing materials. HSSI’s innovation, which uses a thinner tie layer between metal and rubbery polypropylene, offers new solutions that will lower production costs, reduce product weight, and eliminate volatile organic compound emissions.”

“The project with Hutchinson is the latest for the NHIRC program that since inception has created over 650 jobs and greater than \$900 million in follow-on capital for New Hampshire companies,” said Marc Sedam, executive director of the NHIRC. “Granite State Technology Innovation Grants promote promising university-industry collaborations that have the highest potential to accelerate the company’s growth and reinvigorate the manufacturing workforce for our state.”

“The funds we’ve been granted through the NHIRC allow us to address questions at a pace much quicker than we’d ever be able to without,” said Paul R. MacDonald, plant manager at Hutchinson. “The research knowledge we’ve been able to access through UNH has allowed us to confidently conclude which complimentary materials allow us to produce a superior product while we march toward commercialization. Through this partnership, we’re also thrilled to have served in the development of undergraduate student talent from UNH.”

Granite State Technology Innovation Grants support projects under development in the private sector. Projects vary from proof-of-concept to a substantial product or process design. Companies are required to provide matching dollars or services and to receive additional NHIRC-sponsored training in Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) or Small Business Technology Transfer (STTR) grant writing in an effort to improve leverage of NHIRC dollars.

To learn more about the NHIRC and how to apply for funding, visit <http://www.nhirc.unh.edu>.

About the New Hampshire Innovation Research Center

The NH Innovation Research Center (NHIRC) was created in 1991 by the New Hampshire Legislature to increase collaboration, technology development and innovation between New Hampshire businesses and universities. Businesses match their project awards to fund research, which often

leads to new products and processes. Goals of the program include increased competitiveness and profitability for businesses, an increase in the tax-base and in the number of quality jobs for the state of New Hampshire, federal funding of Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) awards, and additional funding from venture capitalists. For more information, visit <http://www.nhirc.unh.edu/>.

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