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For immediate release

Building the Manufacturing Workforce of the Future

- *Honda EPIC initiative seeks to inspire and prepare next generation workforce*
- *Video game, "Techie Camps," mobile labs and scholarships highlight program*

MARYSVILLE, OH (March 20, 2015) – Honda North America, Inc., today announced an innovative \$1 million Ohio-based workforce development initiative to create interest in manufacturing careers and provide educational and training opportunities to prepare the next generation workforce for high-tech positions in the manufacturing industry.

The new program, called EPIC, is designed to proactively address the skills gap in U.S. manufacturing and includes programs for middle school to community college students as well as initiatives for current manufacturing associates at Honda.

This EPIC program draws its name from the four key areas of the initiative:

- creating **E**nthusiasm about manufacturing among middle school students;
- encouraging **P**assion among high school students to harness the power of technology;
- promoting **I**nnovative instruction at two-year colleges; and
- continuing **C**ommitment to further educational opportunities for Honda associates.

According to a study by Deloitte and the Manufacturing Institute, over the next decade, there will be a need for more than 3.4 million manufacturing jobs. And based on continued job creation and an aging workforce, two million of those jobs – nearly 60 percent – will go unfilled because prospective employees lack interest or essential skills.

"This initiative is geared toward creating interest in manufacturing as a career at the middle school, high school and college levels and then providing continued opportunities in the workplace," said Rick Schostek, executive vice president of Honda North America. "We realize manufacturing has always been key to America's economic strength and we want to implement programs that create opportunities not only for ourselves, but for every company with an interest in U.S. manufacturing."

As one effort to create enthusiasm among younger students, Honda worked with Edheads, a Hilliard, Ohio educational game developer, to create a first-of-its kind manufacturing [video game](#) designed for classroom use. The game teaches logic, critical thinking and takes the user right to the engine manufacturing line where they apply math and problem solving skills to find answers to real world problems.

Other program elements aimed at creating **E**nthusiasm for manufacturing include:

- **Engineering on wheels** – Honda is partnering with businesses and schools to facilitate "hands-on" manufacturing activities in six mobile labs. These labs feature production

robotics and provide students with an opportunity to experience real-world manufacturing technology.

- **Summer STEM “Techie” camps** – Honda will work with TechCorps to sponsor full-day, week-long summer camps that will allow students to immerse themselves in STEM-related activities, computer programming, and web and app development, all in a fun-filled environment.

To encourage **Passion** for manufacturing among high school students, Honda has partnered with two entities to create opportunities including new curriculum, equipment and opportunities to visit Honda facilities.

- Honda will nominate and help fund up to five schools in Union, Logan and Shelby counties to become part of the **SME (Society of Manufacturing Engineers) Education Foundation PRIME initiative**. The participating schools will receive funding from Honda for advanced curriculum and support of STEM activities.
- Honda is supporting the **Marysville Early College STEM High School**, which was developed through a collaborative partnership with Marysville schools, Columbus State Community College, Ohio Hi Point Career Center, Honda and the Union County Chamber of Commerce. The project was funded with a State of Ohio “Straight A Fund” grant. Honda has worked with the school to select lab equipment, lay out the space, select an instructor and develop the curriculum for the manufacturing pathway. Honda technicians and engineers are also creating opportunities for the students to learn about these exciting manufacturing careers through tours and know-how sharing.

Honda is also partnering with area two-year colleges to provide incoming high school students with opportunities and Innovative programs.

- Honda is announcing **twelve, \$2,500 scholarships** for students pursuing an associate degree in Manufacturing or Mechanical Engineering Technology from local college institutions (Rhodes State, Columbus State, Marion Technical, Edison Community, Sinclair Community and Clark State).
- Honda will expand the **work-study pilot program** that it developed with Columbus State Community College. This program allows students the opportunity to work at Honda three days a week, while taking classes two days. This provides students with an opportunity to build technical skills while earning their degrees. Honda will expand the pilot from three students to 18 and work with the Ohio Board of Regents to expand the program to other college partners.

Additionally, Honda’s **Commitment** to providing on-going technical training for its associates is on display with two new technical development centers. These centers provide the opportunity for associates to train on the latest manufacturing technologies and build on the skills and knowledge they have gained throughout their careers. These centers, one for powertrain at the Anna Engine Plant and another for vehicle production near the Marysville Auto Plant, are designed to help operational and equipment maintenance associates gain the expertise necessary for the high-tech machinery utilized in manufacturing settings. Further, a training curriculum includes basic fundamentals as well as advanced training for specialized

areas. These training initiatives are part of Honda's commitment to its associates to keep them up-to-date on the latest production technology in the industry.

"The investment we are making in this EPIC initiative is the culmination of many creative partnerships we have forged with educators, businesses and Honda associates to help design this program," said Schostek. "This robust and innovative initiative is designed to be used by Honda and supplier operations in other regions of the country."

About Honda

Honda established operations in America in 1959 and now employs more than 39,000 associates in its North American sales, R&D and manufacturing operations with total capital investment in North America exceeding \$22 billion.

Based on its longstanding commitment to "build products close to the customer," Honda operates 17 major manufacturing facilities in North America producing a wide range of Honda and Acura automobiles, automobile engines and transmissions, Honda all-terrain vehicles, power equipment products, such as lawn mowers, mini-tillers and general purpose engines, and the HondaJet advanced light jet.

Eight Honda auto plants in the region, including four in the U.S., have the capacity to produce 1.92 million automobiles each year. In 2014, more than 97 percent of the Honda and Acura automobiles sold in the U.S. were produced in North America. Those plants today manufacture 12 different models, including five passenger cars and seven light trucks using domestic and globally sourced parts. A fifth U.S. auto plant, the Performance Manufacturing Center, is under construction in Marysville, Ohio, and will become the exclusive global production location for the next generation Acura NSX supercar.

Honda also operates 14 research and development centers in the U.S. with the capacity to fully design, develop and engineer many of the products Honda produces in North America.

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