



Press Release  
Contact Chip Laingen

## ADVANCED POWER & ENERGY CLUSTER ENDS YEAR WITH RECORD OF JOB CREATION

**Minneapolis-St. Paul, Minnesota – 07 October 2011:** The *Advanced Power & Energy Cluster* (APC) completed its first year of operation last month. The APC is engaged in connecting the innovation of small businesses to technology needs for the nation's defense, and for commercial applications. The initiative has helped to create 143 jobs and achieve \$6.6 million in Department of Defense (DoD) and private business contract awards in the past year, while acting as a catalyst for technology-based economic development. The APC currently has 82 member companies and organizations in 21 states.

Operated by the Defense Alliance and funded by the Small Business Administration (SBA), the APC is one of 10 Regional Innovation Clusters (RICs), three of which are intended to promote "advanced defense technologies." The Defense Alliance selected the power and energy sector because of this region's strong manufacturing, R&D and entrepreneurial focus on related technologies.

According to the APC's executive director: *"DoD has finally realized that energy solutions can provide savings and combat effectiveness at the same time. As a result there are a lot of new policy mandates that set out ambitious goals for DoD energy savings. We believe that the best way to obtain those is to have small businesses just jump in the game and start contributing, rather than waiting for the DoD to come to them – or waiting for requirements to be well defined,"* said Chip Laingen. The APC operates together with its "Partners," who bring highly focused and effective business mentoring to the membership. The Partners include Paradigm Positioning, the Dakota Defense Alliance, TechLink and MilTech. The APC also leverages key existing collaborative relationships held by the Defense Alliance, including with economic development organizations, government entities, academic institutions and large defense contractors.

*"The DoD has made energy efficiency a high priority for all bases and military applications,"* said APC Partner Tom Nelson. *"There are numerous opportunities for new technologies and applications that will save energy and make all components of the defense industry more efficient. This is a tremendous opportunity for innovative small business technologies to make a difference."* The industry focus area of power and energy also means that the APC is working with Members to find opportunities outside of the DoD as well. DoD, DoE or other government agency funding often leads to commercial applications – and vice versa. According to the APC's Business Director, Patria Lawton, *"Our Members range from small businesses that have worked with the DoD for years, to those who are really energized by the way in which our Partners can help explain this challenging market to them."*

The ultimate goal remains bringing value and innovation to the nation's power and energy needs, particularly for defense applications, and to help foster regional economic growth through job creation. Learn more about the APC at [www.powerfordefense.com](http://www.powerfordefense.com).



The Defense Alliance is an independent business network headquartered in St. Paul, Minnesota. Its mission is to network and expand the defense and homeland security industries, to create and retain high quality jobs, and to further promote the region's important contributions to our men and women of the armed forces. The Defense Alliance is an Advanced Defense Technologies (ADT) Cluster for the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA), principally focused on advanced power and energy technology solutions in the Upper Midwest.