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Proto Labs Announces 2015 Cool Idea! Award Judge Panel

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Mike North, Emile Petrone and Ben Einstein join the ultimate panel of innovation leaders in the design and manufacturing industry

MAPLE PLAIN, Minn.--(BUSINESS WIRE)--Jan. 13, 2015-- Entering its fifth year of awarding innovative designers with the funding and services to create parts and prototypes, the Cool Idea! Award is announcing its 2015 panel of judges that includes some of the design and manufacturing industry's most respected leaders.

The team of judges evaluates incoming submissions on originality, feasibility, potential benefit to the end user and innate coolness. Winners are chosen from top-scoring entries to receive Proto Labs' prototyping and short-run production services to take their idea from design to finished product.

Proto Labs is honored to announce the following as those who will be at the helm of the 2015 Cool Idea! Award judge panel:

- **Ben Einstein** is an experienced product designer and investor. Ben is currently the Managing Director of Bolt, an early-stage seed fund focused exclusively on hardware start-ups. In addition to seed capital, Bolt invests in full-time staff, shop equipment and extensive expertise with manufacturing and commercialization.
- **Larry Lukis** is the founder and Chairman of the Board at Proto Labs.
- **Scott N. Miller** is the CEO of Dragon Innovation, a company that works to help hardware entrepreneurs succeed in every phase of the journey, from crowdfunding to manufacturing at scale.
- **Mike North** has previously been the host of Discovery Channel's " *Prototype This!*" where he uncovered cutting-edge prototypes. Mike often speaks about the current state and future of science and technology, and is a respected motivational speaker. He is involved in several start-ups, educational programs, ongoing research and is an advisor to multiple companies.
- **Emile Petrone** is founder and CEO of Tindie, a marketplace for indie hardware. In two and a half years, Tindie has helped over 800 companies bring over 3,800 products to market.

Proto Labs founder, Larry Lukis, noted that he is enthusiastic about the new year of the program: "We are thrilled to again work with Scott, and are excited to welcome the new members to the panel this year."

Proto Labs is now accepting submissions for the 2015 program, and will be reviewing entries every two months. Apply now at www.protolabs.com/cool-idea.

About the Cool Idea! Award

Since 2011, the Cool Idea! Award has provided more than \$750,000 in Proto Labs prototyping and short-run production services to entrepreneurs developing new products in the United States and Europe. Unlike other product awards that recognize products after they're in mass production and on store shelves, the Cool Idea! Award is meant to help innovative ideas come to life. For more information about the Cool Idea! Award and to apply, visit www.protolabs.com/cool-idea.

About Proto Labs

Proto Labs (NYSE: PRLB) is an online and technology-enabled rapid manufacturer of custom parts for prototyping and low- to mid-volume production. By utilizing quick-turn injection molding, CNC machining and additive manufacturing processes, Proto Labs can produce parts within days for product designers and engineers worldwide. Go to www.protolabs.com for more information about the company and its services.



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