

IACMI intern Justin LaBelle

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MSU chemical engineering student lands coveted spot in 2017 Composites Institute internship class

Michigan State University's Justin LaBelle landed one of 21 coveted slots in the 2017 Institute for Advanced Composites Manufacturing Innovation (IACMI) Composites Institute internship class.



The chemical engineering sophomore from Chesterfield Township was chosen from among hundreds of applicants to spend 10 weeks at the IACMI Vehicle Scale-up Facility in Detroit's Corktown. IACMI fosters low-cost, energy-efficient manufacturing technologies and nurtures new technology leaders.

"I have made many connections with the employees and engineers on-site and have worked in injection molding with composite materials. I also troubleshoot the equipment when systems fail," LaBelle said. "Both experiences are highly useful going forward."

LaBelle's primary internship mentor is Dan Houston, an affiliate for IACMI/MSU in Corktown and a consultant at MSU's Composite Materials and Structures Center.

"My mentors and I have learned the mechanics of running an injection molding machine and I've been tasked to optimize the process through the use of an Excel spreadsheet. This internship is an incredible experience for me and my work moving ahead."

LaBelle hopes to work in automotive or pharmaceutical research when he graduates.

Bryan Dods, IACMI's chief executive officer, said the quality of LaBelle's internship experiences is exactly why IACMI strives to provide hands-on access to its state-of-the-art manufacturing equipment and advanced composites scientists and engineers.

“By exposing these bright, talented individuals to leading-edge composites technology research, the program provides an unparalleled opportunity for students to become engaged in, and contribute to, activities relevant to the composites industry,” he said.

Twenty-one graduate and undergraduate students are conducting research at various partner locations across the United States at sites that align with IACMI’s shared research, development, and demonstration areas: composite materials and process; compressed gas storage; design, modeling and simulation; vehicles; and wind turbines.

Other 2017 IACMI interns and their institutions are:

- **Brayden Aller**, a junior at Vanderbilt University, who is interning at Vanderbilt in Nashville, Tennessee;
- **Alix Ambrose**, a senior at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville, who is interning at RMX Technologies in Knoxville, Tennessee;
- **Alejandra Castellanos**, a Ph.D. student at the University of Texas – El Paso, who is interning at Purdue University in West Lafayette, Indiana;
- **Emily Esther**, a senior at the University of Tulsa in Tulsa, Oklahoma, who is interning at the IACMI Vehicle Scale-up Facility in the Corktown area of Detroit, Michigan;
- **David Gardiner**, a junior at Virginia Tech, who is interning at Local Motors in Knoxville, Tennessee;
- **Cody Knight**, a junior at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville, who is interning at the IACMI Materials and Processes Lab at the Oak Ridge National Laboratory’s Manufacturing Demonstration Facility;
- **Jessica Lavorata**, a senior at Winona State University in Minnesota, who is interning at the National Wind Technology Center and Colorado School of Mines in Golden, Colorado;
- **Hannah Maeser**, a senior at Clemson University in South Carolina, who is interning at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville;
- **Andrew Munro**, a junior at the University of Dayton in Ohio, who is interning at the University of Dayton Research Institute;
- **Ryan Ogle**, a junior at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville, who is interning at the IACMI Materials and Processes Lab at the Oak Ridge National Laboratory’s Manufacturing Demonstration Facility
- **Christina Paris**, a sophomore at the Georgia Tech, who is interning at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville;
- **Susan Schickling**, a junior at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville, who is interning at Oak Ridge National Laboratory in Oak Ridge, Tennessee;
- **Lindsay Schurbon**, a post-graduate student at the University of Colorado – Denver, who is interning at the National Wind Technology Center and Colorado School of Mines in Golden, Colorado;

The IACMI internship program is in its second year and is managed by [Oak Ridge Associated Universities](#). Find out more at IACMI.org.

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