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## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

### **US\$20,000 AWARDED TO T.C. GRAHAM PRIZE AWARD WINNER** *Recognizing innovative steel applications for development of new markets*

PITTSBURGH, 12 November 2018 — Two Georgia Tech researchers have been named winners of the Association for Iron & Steel Technology's (AIST) 2018 [T.C. Graham Prize](#), an international award meant to encourage development of new and innovative uses for steel.

Dr. Julie Champion, associate professor, and Dr. Dennis Hess, professor and Thomas C. DeLoach Jr. Chair of the School of Chemical and Biomolecular Engineering, received the US\$20,000 prize for creating nanotexture on stainless steel through electrochemical etching, which decreases the attachment of bacteria and kills bacteria while simultaneously improving corrosion resistance. Adding this nanotexture to stainless steel food and beverage equipment, biomedical devices and a variety of other surfaces to prevent bacteria infection could have a wide application.

Dr. Champion received the T.C. Graham Prize award during at AIST's 2018 Leadership Conference in New Orleans, La., USA, on 5 November 2018. Dr. Champion said that winning the prize would help in two major ways: "The prize money will allow us to further our research to get new data and show that we can use this in other applications that will be useful in stainless steel products. Possibly more important is the visibility (winning the prize) brings. This will really expose us to steel companies that might be interested in partnering with us to implement our technology into their products. As an academic professor, we have a limited ability to get something to the commercial arena and have it available for people to use."

When informed of their success, Dr. Champion was initially taken aback. "I don't necessarily think of manipulating very tiny structures as something that would be recognized by a big institution like this, where the focus, in my mind, is on large objects. The other finalists seemed to make large things, so it was a little surprising that something so tiny would be recognized as having the potential to make an impact."

Champion and Hess' proposal represented one of a diverse group of individual and team applicants from around the world. From that group, three finalists were ultimately selected, and Dr. Champion presented the proposals during a live video conference to the Contest Jury on 28 August 2018. During the conference, each finalist had 10 minutes to present their submission to the jury of global steel industry executives, followed by a brief question-and-answer session.

The [Contest Jury](#) consisted of **John Ferriola**, chairman, president and chief executive officer, Nucor Corp.; **Mark Millett**, president and chief executive officer, Steel Dynamics Inc.; **Roger Newport**, chief executive officer, AK Steel; and **Barbara Smith**, president and chief executive officer, Commercial Metals Company.

For more information regarding the T.C. Graham Prize, please visit the [T.C. Graham Prize webpage](#).

[AIST](#) is a non-profit technical association of 17,500 members from 70 countries, with the mission to advance the technical development, production, processing and application of iron and steel. The organization is recognized

as a global leader in networking, education and sustainability programs for advancing iron and steel technology.

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