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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**AMBA Announces 2022 Mold Builder and Tooling Trailblazer of the Year Award Recipients**

The American Mold Builders Association (AMBA), Indianapolis, IN, proudly presented Tom Barr, TK Mold & Engineering, Inc., Romeo, MI, with the 2022 Mold Builder of the Year Award and CompuMold Tool & Design, Inc. with the Tooling Trailblazer of the Year Award during the AMBA Conference 2022, May 11-13, 2022, Itasca, IL. The awards, sponsored by Progressive Components, include a $5,000 endowment to each winner for continuing education in mold building, to be presented to the educational institution of the recipient's choice.

Tom Barr has been a leader and mentor in the mold building industry for decades. In his early years, he worked in the family business alongside his father and uncles, learning the craft and feeding his passion for the trade. Proudly earning his journeyman’s certificate in the early 90s, he went to work for a mold manufacturer, honed his skills and later purchased the business. After surviving the Great Recession in 2008 and 2009, he realized that, in order to continue to mitigate a maturing workforce, he would need to invest in developing the company’s next generation of employees, and he began exploring the design of an apprenticeship program customized for his facility. In 2017, Barr officially registered his apprenticeship program, which – alongside improved quality, cultural change and a better understanding of where employees would thrive – has generated significant returns for his business. Today, TK Mold & Engineering, Inc. employs 24 employees, a bevy of which are current or past apprentices. Whether sitting on advisory boards for Macomb Community College and Romeo High School or being an active participant on the AMBA Board of Directors, Tom Barr’s passion for this industry continues to be demonstrated through his hands-on interactions with students and with industry peers.

CompuMold Tool & Design was awarded the 2022 AMBA Tooling Trailblazer of the Year Award, established to recognize AMBA member accomplishments that have resulted in a notable impact in the area of education. This company was recognized for its intimate involvement in the local school system, where company employees have demonstrated the range of jobs available in the industry and provided hands-on opportunities to students interested in the trade. Whether through investment in the industrial arts and fabrication classes at the local high school, its offering of a Student Assistantship program (through which local Wisconsin high school students can job shadow at the facility) or its recent hiring of apprentices through the Department of Labor certified Wisconsin Apprenticeship Program, this facility has made it its mission to cultivate the next generation of mold builders in its community.

For more details on the AMBA Mold Builder of the Year and Tooling Trailblazer of the Year Awards, visit AMBA.org.

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**About AMBA**

The American Mold Builders Association (AMBA) is the only organization dedicated to elevating the competitive advantage of U.S. mold builders. AMBA provides workforce development initiatives, networking, benchmarking opportunities and industry promotion. AMBA members receive a variety of additional benefits, including access to cost-reduction programs, visibility to mold buyers and problem-solving resources that give members a competitive advantage.

To learn more about AMBA membership and ongoing initiatives, visit AMBA.org.