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## **YOROZU BREAKS GROUND ON NEW JASPER FACILITY**

**Yorozu Corporation Set to Invest Over \$100,000,000 and Create 300 Jobs**

Jasper, AL, January 15, 2016– Yorozu Corporation, a global tier one automotive supplier, headquartered in Yokohama, Japan broke ground on a new state of the art metal stamping facility in Jasper. The plant is being built on a 50 acre site in the Jasper Industrial Park. Yorozu plans to invest over \$100,000,000 to construct and equip the new facility that will employ 300 people. Yorozu Automotive Alabama, Inc. (Y.A.A.) will operate as a subsidiary of Yorozu America Corporation.

Yorozu Corporation was founded in 1948 and has grown to include facilities in Japan, North and South America, China and Southeast Asia. The company currently has over 6,000 employees worldwide.

“Jasper is on the move as a result of determination and teamwork,” stated Jasper Mayor Sonny Posey. “Your city, county, and state leadership have spent hundreds of hours working with the great people of Yorozu, which is resulting in the biggest local jobs announcement in recent memory.

Governor Robert Bentley commented, “the 300 jobs that will be created by Yorozu will positively affect the lives of the people of this district, this city and this county. Bentley touted the efforts of the Walker County Development Authority, the City of Jasper and the Jasper Industrial Board for working as a team to lure Yorozu to Jasper. “Recruiting industry to Alabama starts at the local level.

Akihiko Shido; Chairman and CEO of Yorozu Corporation said “We are excited to be here to celebrate the groundbreaking of Yorozu Automotive Alabama, our second manufacturing plant in the US. We have seen a consistent increase in automobile sales and production in the United States; for Yorozu, the establishment of YAA will help us meet increasing customer demands. Yorozu group would like YAA to be the number one automotive suspension parts manufacturing facility in the world.

Yorozu will supply multiple automotive assembly plants with suspensions and other components from the new Jasper facility. Yorozu anticipates completion of the plant in January 2017 with start of production scheduled for July 2017.

The recruitment of "Project Stamp;" as it was called, when the Department of Commerce first contacted the Walker County Development Authority, exemplifies Alabama's "Team" approach to the economic development process. "The teamwork and cooperation between the State, Local Leaders, Boards and Utilities, was critical to the successful recruitment of Yorozu," said David Knight, Executive Director of the Walker County Development Authority. "Walker County's close proximity to multiple automotive OEM's, direct access to Interstate 22 and a high quality labor force provided key advantages during the site selection process."

State Senator, Greg Reed who served as Master of Ceremony for the groundbreaking said "Today is a great day for our area and the state of Alabama as we break ground on the new Yorozu facilities. This new partnership is exciting for Yorozu as well as those that will work in the manufacturing of their products. The economic growth in our communities will continue as we all work together. I am proud to be a part."

"With the upcoming completion of I-22 into Birmingham, available workforce, and a pad ready site, Yorozu has selected the perfect time to locate in the new Jasper Industrial Park," said Russ Robertson, Chairman of the Jasper Industrial Development Board. "This decision was the result of a great deal of work on the part of the company, as well as several local and State entities, including the Jasper Industrial Development Board and the Walker County Development Authority and it serves as an example of what can be accomplished when a community is unified in its efforts."

Yorozu America President Jack Phillips said. "This plant will utilize state of the art technology with respect to production automation and logistics automation. It is the goal of the Yorozu group for this plant to be the number one suspension parts production facility in the world."

Billy Luster, Chairman of the Walker County Commission said, "A project like this will be so beneficial to our regional economy. The Walker County Development Authority has worked diligently to prepare our County for development opportunities. This is a perfect example of what can be accomplished when Local Governments and Private Corporations join together to make great things happen."

"We are proud to be part of the economic development team along with Jasper, Walker County and state of Alabama officials who have been working with Yorozu Automotive," said Blair King, Alabama Power Economic Development project manager. "With the completion of I-22 just around the corner coupled with a project of this magnitude, the future of the I-22 corridor is very exciting."

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