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AIAA ANNOUNCES SECTION AWARDS WINNERS

Awards Honor Outstanding Section Programming in a Variety of Categories

August 16, 2021 – Reston, Va. – The American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics (AIAA) has announced its 2020–2021 section awards winners. The section awards honor particularly notable achievements made by member sections in a range of activities that help fulfill the Institute’s mission.

Section awards are given annually in five categories based on the size of each section’s membership. Each winning section receives a certificate and a cash award. The award period covered is 1 June 2020–31 May 2021. The Institute believes that vital, active sections are essential to its success.

The **Outstanding Section Award** is presented to sections based upon their overall activities and contributions through the year. The winners are:

- **Very Small: First Place (tie): Delaware**, Daniel Nice (Northrop Grumman Corporation), section chair; **First Place (tie): Vandenberg**, Michelle Itzel (Axient), section chair; **Third Place(tie): Adelaide**, Patrick Neumann (Neumann Space), section chair; **Third Place (tie): Wisconsin**, Michael Carkin (Sierra Nevada Corporation), section chair
- **Small: First Place: Northwest Florida**, Ryan Sherrill, section chair; **Second Place: Utah**, Catherine Beck (Northrop Grumman), section chair; **Third Place (tie): Long Island**, David Paris, section chair; **Third Place (tie): Palm Beach**, Randy Parsley (Pratt & Whitney), section chair
- **Medium: First Place, Tucson**, Michelle Rouch (Artwork by Rouch), section chair; **Second Place: Phoenix**, Michael Mackowski, section chair; **Third Place: Greater Philadelphia**, Jonathan Moore (Lockheed Martin Corporation), section chair
- **Large: First Place (tie): St. Louis**, Mark Kammeyer (The Boeing Company), section chair; **First Place (tie): San Diego**, Joel Perez (Solar Turbines), section chair; **Third Place: Orange County**, James Martin, section chair
- **Very Large: First Place: Los Angeles-Las Vegas**, Chandrashekhar Sonwane (Aerojet Rocketdyne) and Jeffrey Puschell (Raytheon Intelligence and Space), section chairs; **Second Place: Greater Huntsville**, Nishanth Reddy Goli, section chair; **Third Place: Rocky Mountain**, Stacey DeFore (Lockeed Martin Space Systems)

The **Communications Award** is presented to sections that have developed and implemented an outstanding communications outreach program. Winning criteria include level of complexity, timeliness, and variety of methods of communications, as well as frequency, format, and content of the communication outreach. The winners are:

- **Very Small: First Place: Delaware**, Zachary Gent (Northrop Grumman), membership officer; **Second Place: Vandenberg**, Steve Boelhouwer (Mantech International), newsletter editor; **Third Place: Adelaide**, Patrick Neumann (Neumann Space), section chair
- **Small: First Place: Northwest Florida**, Ryan Sherrill, section chair; **Second Place: Utah**, Ryan Clawson, section secretary; **Third Place: Wichita**, Balaji Chandrasekaran Kartikeyan (Wichita State University), section secretary; Alexis Fitzpatrick
- **Medium: First Place: Tucson**, Michelle Rouch (Artwork by Rouch), section chair; **Second Place: Greater Philadelphia**, Jonathan Moore (Lockheed Martin Corporation), section chair; **Third Place: Phoenix**, Michael Mackowski, section chair
- **Large: First Place: Northern Ohio**, Edmond Wong (NASA Glenn), communications officer; **Second Place: Atlanta**, Neil Sutherland (Delta Airlines), section chair; **Third Place: San Diego**, Stevie Jacobson (General Atomics Aeronautical Systems), section secretary
- **Very Large: First Place: Los Angeles-Las Vegas**, Ken Lui (Ken's Consulting), program officer, Jeffrey Puschell (Raytheon Intelligence and Space), section chair; **Second Place: Greater Huntsville**, Nishanth Reddy Goli, section chair, Alex Vasenkov (Sunergolab), publicity officer; **Third Place: Hampton Roads**, John Lin (NASA Langley) Lee Mears (NASA Langley), newsletter editors

The **Membership Award** is presented to sections that have supported their membership by planning and implementing effective recruitment and retention campaigns. The winners are:

- **Very Small: First Place: Vandenberg**, Michelle Itzel (Axient), section chair; **Second Place: Delaware**, Christina Larson (Northrop Grumman), communications officer; **Third Place: Adelaide**, Patrick Neumann (Neumann Space), section chair
- **Small: First Place: Northwest Florida**, Ryan Sherrill, section chair; **Second Place : Utah**, Michael Miller (Northrop Gruman), membership officer; **Third Place: Wichita**, Wilfredo Cortez (Department of Defense)
- **Medium: First Place: Tucson**, Rajka Corder (Raytheon Missile Systems), membership officer; **Second Place: Greater Philadelphia**, Jonathan Moore (Lockheed Martin Corporation), section chair; **Third Place, Antelope Valley**, Chris Coyne (U.S. Air Force), publicity officer
- **Large: First Place: St. Louis**, Alex Friedman (The Boeing Company), membership officer; **Second Place (tie): Orange County**, Robert Welge (Robert's Engineering Development), membership officer; **Second Place (tie): San Diego**, Joel Perez (Solar Turbines), section chair
- **Very Large: First Place: Hampton Roads**, Richard Winski (NASA Langley), membership officer; **Second Place: Los Angeles-Las Vegas**, Aldo Martinez Martinez (The Boeing Company), membership officer; **Third Place: Greater Huntsville**, Paul Palies (University of Tennessee Space Institute), membership officer

The **Public Policy Award** is presented for stimulating public awareness of the needs of aerospace research and development, particularly on the part of government representatives, and for education section members about the value of public policy activities. The winners are:

- **Very Small: First Place: Delaware**, Di Ena Davis, public policy officer; **Second Place: Vandenberg**, Michelle Itzel (Axient), public policy officer and section chair; **Third Place, Adelaide**, Patrick Neumann (Neumann Space), section chair

- **Small: First Place: Palm Beach**, Kevin Simmons (BLUECUBE Aerospace), public policy officer; **Second Place: Utah**, Charlie Vono, public policy officer; **Third Place: Northwest Florida**, Michael Kelton (U.S. Air Force), membership officer
- **Medium: First Place: Tucson**, Robert Tagtmeyer (Raytheon Missiles & Defense), public policy officer; **Second Place (tie): Phoenix**, Brianna Grembowski (Northrop Grumman Space Systems), public policy officer; **Second Place (tie): Greater Philadelphia**, Nicholas Altobelli (Lockheed Martin Corporation), communications officer
- **Large: First Place: Orange County**, Kamal Shweyk (Boeing Commercial Airplanes), public policy officer; **Second Place (tie): San Diego**, Cesar Martin (U.S. Navy), public policy officer; **Second Place (tie): Niagara Frontier**, Walter Gordon, section chair
- **Very Large: First Place: Greater Huntsville**, Naveen Vetcha (ERC Incorporated), public policy officer; **Second Place: Rocky Mountain**, Joe Rice (Lockheed Martin Space Systems), public policy officer; **Third Place: Los Angeles-Las Vegas**, Jordan Chilcott, public policy officer

The **STEM K–12 Award** is presented to sections that have developed and implemented an outstanding STEM K–12 outreach program that provides quality education resources for K–12 teachers in the STEM subject areas. The winners are:

- **Very Small: First Place: Vandenberg**, Thomas Stevens (U.S. Air Force) STEM K12 outreach officer; **Second Place (tie): Wisconsin**, Todd Treichel (Sierra Nevada Corporation), STEM K-12 outreach officer; **Second Place (tie): Delaware**, Kelly Storrs (Northrop Grumman); Stem K-12 outreach officer
- **Small: First Place: Northwest Florida**, Judith Sherrill, STEM K-12 outreach officer; **Second Place: Palm Beach**, Shawna Christenson, STEM K–12 outreach officer; **Third Place: Wichita**, Minisa Childers (Aeronautix)
- **Medium: First Place: Tucson**, Michelle Rouch (Artwork by Rouch), section chair officer; **Second Place: Antelope Valley**, Robert Jensen (Sierra Lobo, Inc), STEM K-12 officer and Jason Lechniak (NASA Armstrong), section chair
- **Large: First Place: Cape Canaveral**, Melissa Sleeper (Storm Grove Middle School/School District of Indian River), STEM K–12 outreach officer; **Second Place: St. Louis**; Jackie Blumer (Greenville Jr. High School), STEM K-12 outreach officer; **Third Place: Orange County**, Ed Rocha, Binay Pandey and Janet Koepke, STEM K–12 outreach officers
- **Very Large: First Place: Los Angeles-Las Vegas**, Khushbu Patel, STEM K-12 outreach officer; **Second Place (tie): Rocky Mountain**, Susan Jannsen (United Launch Alliance), STEM K-12 outreach officer; **Second Place (tie): Hampton Roads**, Karen Berger (NASALangley) and Amanda Chou, (NASA Langley), STEM K-12 outreach officers; **Second Place (tie): Greater Huntsville**, Ragini Acharya (University of Tennessee Space Institute), STEM K-12 officer

The **Section-Student Branch Partnership Award** recognizes the most effective and innovative collaboration between the professional section members and student branch members.

- **Very Small: First Place: Adelaide**, Patrick Neumann (Neumann Space), section chair; **Second Place: Vandenberg**, Evan Agarwal, university liaison; **Third Place: Wisconsin**, Michael Carkin (Sierra Nevada Corporation), section chair

- **Small: First Place: Northwest Florida**, John Fay (Torch Technologies), education officer; **Second Place: Twin Cities**, Kristen Gerzina (Northrop Grumman), section chair; **Third Place: Utah**, Michael Stevens (Northrop Grumman), programs officer
- **Medium: First Place: Tucson**, Alexis Hepburn (Raytheon Missiles and Space), career and workforce development officer and Rob Michalak (Paragon Space Development); **Second Place; Greater Philadelphia**, Jonathan Moore (Lockheed Martin Corporation), section chair; **Third Place: Phoenix**, Michael Mackowski, section chair
- **Large: First Place: San Diego**, Joel Perez (Solar Turbines), section chair; **Second Place, Albuquerque**, Svetlana Poroseva University of New Mexico), university liaison; **Third Place, Atlanta**, Neil Sutherland (Delta Airlines), section chair and Aaron Harcrow, membership officer; **St. Louis**, Charles Svoboda (The Boeing Company), education officer
- **Very Large: First Place, Los Angeles-Las Vegas**, Khusbu Patel, STEM K-12 officer; **Second Place: Rocky Mountain**, Dan Scantland; **Third Place: New England**, Umanga Balasuriya (Charles River Analytics), university liaison

The **Young Professional Activity Award** is presented for excellence in planning and executing events that encourage the participation of the Institute's young professional members, and provide opportunities for leadership at the section, regional, or national level. The winners are:

- **Very Small: First Place: Adelaide**, Mahdy Alhameed (University of Adelaide), young professional officer; **Second Place: Wisconsin**, Michael Carkin (Sierra Nevada Corporation), section chair; **Third Place: Delaware**, Taylor Coleman, young professional officer
- **Small: First Place: Northwest Florida**, Alexandra Straub (U.S. Air Force), young professional officer; **Second Place (tie): Savannah**, Alessandra Carno, young professional officer; **Second Place (tie): Utah**, Justin Wettstein (Northrop Grumman), young professional officer
- **Medium: First Place: Tucson**, Michael Hotto (Raytheon Technologies), young professional officer; **Second Place: Antelope Valley**, Joseph Piotrowski (NASA Armstrong), young professional officer; **Third Place: Greater Philadelphia**, Jonathan Moore (Lockheed Martin Corporation), section chair
- **Large: First Place: St. Louis**, Stephen Clark (The Boeing Company), young professional officer; **Second Place: Orange County**, Bradley Williams (Tyvak Nano-Satellite Systems), young professional officer; **Third Place (tie): Niagara Frontier**, Walter Gordon, section chair officer; **Third Place (tie): Northern Ohio**, Dan Londrico, young professional officer
- **Very Large: First Place: Los Angeles-Las Vegas**: Brett Cornick, Aakash Nareshkumar (rovisys) and Ken Lui (Ken's Consulting), young professional section officers; **Second Place: Rocky Mountain**, Alexandra Dukes (Lockheed Martin Space Systems) and Tyler Walston, young professional officers; **Third Place: Hampton Roads**, Michelle Lynde (NASA Langley Research Center) and Brett Hiller (NASA Langley Research Center), young professional section officers

The **Outstanding Activity Award** allows the Institute to acknowledge sections that held an outstanding activity deserving of additional recognition. The winners are:

- **Very Small: Wisconsin**, Michael Carkin, section chair. **Rocket Science for Future Engineers**. This program focused on female K-12 students from the underserved areas of Wisconsin education.

Hands-on demonstrations, visual aids, and real-life space flight examples provide a foundation for bringing these students face-to-face with space-related science, designed hardware, technology, and their potential benefits; increasing interest in aerospace and space related fields that lead to study at the university level followed by career. Teams built a high-powered rocket, made use of the established AIAA rocket science curriculum (workbooks, and RockSim simulation software) and built a high-powered rocket for the purpose of launch of a small research payload. Areas such as chemistry, computer-aided design, problem solving, electronics, and graphic design were included in this initiative.

- **Small: Utah**, Catherine Beck, section chair. **Wasatch Aerospace and Systems Engineering Mini-Conference.** The Utah Section of AIAA and the Wasatch Chapter of INCOSE partnered together to create the inaugural “Wasatch Aerospace and Systems Engineering Mini-Conference,” a two-day event that highlighted the work of industry and academic professionals, students, and retirees. The theme of the conference was “Celebrating the Creativity of Engineers,” to highlight the interconnectivity that exists between creativity and engineering. There were 21 presentations given over the two days by speakers from across the country with cash prizes in each category. Giveaways were sent to all conference attendees that highlighted local artists and businesses as well as corporate sponsors. Attendees could work on an optional technical competition either a coding challenge titled “Remote Controls” or a Lego challenge titled “W.F.H. (Winning From Home)”. There was a “Geeks Who Drink” Trivia Night on Thursday night including door prizes from local artists. All of this was completed via Zoom due to the COVID-19 pandemic. There were approximately 65 total attendees.
- **Medium: Tucson**, Michelle Rouch, section chair. **Celebrating the 50th Anniversary of the Apollo 14 Mission.** In 2020 many organizations had to cancel their in-person Apollo 13 50th Anniversary celebration. The Apollo 14 50th Anniversary lunar mission occurred between January 31, 1971 and February 9, 1971. On February 8, 2021, on the eve of the Apollo 14 splashdown, section members and non-members a section meeting with special guest, Jack Roosa, who shared stories about his father, Stuart Roosa, who was the Command Module pilot during the Apollo 14 Mission. Although it was virtual, attendees were honored by offering gift cards, free admission for members next field trip to Pima Air & Space Museum and door prizes.
- **Large: Northern Ohio**, Christine Pastor-Barsi, section chair. **Young Aerospace Visionaries Contest.** To ignite or strengthen interest in STEM, particularly as it relates to the field of aerospace, students were invited to use their imaginations to push the boundaries of what is possible in the future, in order to create a visual depiction of their futuristic vision of air or space travel technologies. Each visual submission was accompanied by a written essay describing the student’s vision, providing rationale for it, and giving some background about their interest in the field of aerospace. There were different grade ranges for project judging, based on the student's grade level. A total of 26 applications were received from 7 different counties, 11 different schools and 1 home school student. Awards for the top three submissions, included monetary awards, admission to the Great Lakes Science Center, and the option to attend the section’s Annual Picnic for engagement with section members and recognition.

Honorable Mention: Niagara Frontier, Walter Gordon, section chair. **An Inside Look at the F-35A.** Captain Kristin “Beo” Wolfe, commander and demonstration pilot for the U.S. Air Force F-35A Demonstration Team, gave an inside look at this unmatched fifth generation fighter. The F-35A Lightning II is without question the most capable multirole fighter aircraft in the world, combining stealth, sensor fusion, and unmatched situational awareness.

- **Very Large: Rocky Mountain**, Stacey DeFore, section chair. **“A NIGHT AMONGST THE STARS” 2020 Honors & Awards Recognition Drive-In.** The Rocky Mountain section invited guests to honor awardees, fellows and associate fellow for recognition in the first-ever Drive-In Awards. The program was broadcast on a 26’ LED screen with audio delivered via a designated FM radiofrequency.

Immediately following the program, guests were treated to a showing of Apollo 13. All necessary precautions for social distancing followed Colorado state guidelines. Awardees drove up to the front of the stage and were celebrated by the audience through headlight flashing and car horns.

- **Honorable Mention: Greater Huntsville**, Nishanth Reddy Goli, section chair. **Alabama Quiz Bowl State Championships.** In support of the State Championships for the Alabama Academic Quiz Bowl, the section hosted the two large, traditionally in-person tournaments — one for middle school and one for high school — through Zoom sessions and Buzzin.live, an online buzzer system. The section and other partners sponsored the tournaments by providing support in the form of funding, volunteers, technical expertise, and even a tournament director to handle all the logistics and coordination associated with live, online tournaments.

About AIAA

The American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics (AIAA) is the world's largest aerospace technical society. With nearly 30,000 individual members from 85 countries, and 95 corporate members, AIAA brings together industry, academia, and government to advance engineering and science in aviation, space, and defense. For more information, www.aiaa.org, or follow us on Twitter [@AIAA](https://twitter.com/AIAA).