



# Press Release

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**Vertical Flight Society Announces  
2021 Individual Recipients of Its Prestigious Awards**

*Ten vertical flight leaders recognized for their invaluable contributions to vertical flight*

**Fairfax, VA, March 29, 2021** — The Vertical Flight Society today announced the 2021 individual recipients of its prestigious awards program. Since the establishment of the VFS awards program in 1944, they have paid tribute to the outstanding leaders of vertical takeoff and landing (VTOL) aircraft and technology, serving as a catalyst for stimulating technological advances. This year's winners will be recognized virtually during the 77th Annual VFS Awards Ceremony, premiering on Wednesday, May 5, 2021 at 2:00 pm EDT at [www.youtube.com/VTOLSociety](http://www.youtube.com/VTOLSociety). The ceremony is open to the public.

“For more than 75 years, the Vertical Flight Society has recognized the leading contributors to advancing vertical flight,” said VFS Executive Director Mike Hirschberg. “This year's winners highlight impressive contributions made by VFS members in advancing the state of the art of VTOL aircraft, from decades of improvements to helicopters to the latest breakthroughs in advanced rotorcraft, unmanned VTOL aircraft and electric VTOL technology.”

**William (Bill) Welsh**, Senior Technical Fellow, Dynamics at Sikorsky, a Lockheed Martin Company, is this year's honored recipient of the **Dr. Alexander Klemin Award**, the highest honor the Vertical Flight Society bestows on an individual for notable achievement in advancing the field of vertical flight aeronautics. Welsh was recognized for more than 40 years of contributions in the field of rotorcraft dynamics, including his leadership in advancing the state of the art in the active control of noise and vibration in helicopters. His 35 patents attest to his unique combination of theoretical expertise, understanding of complex machinery, and ingenuity to solve problems and bring new products to fruition.

The title of **Honorary Fellow** is granted to highly distinguished Society members who have made exceptional leadership, innovative or other meritorious contributions that have significantly advanced VFS and the vertical flight community during their career. The 2021 Honorary Fellows are:

- **Daniel (Dan) Newman**, Chief Engineer, Advanced Vertical Lift, Phantom Works Division, The Boeing Company: Newman's 38-year career in industry, academic and government has had major impacts on the development of advanced rotorcraft and other VTOL systems, while his leadership within VFS continues to support the education and development of future generations of engineers.
- **Dr. James Wang**, Professor, and Director of eVTOL Research and Innovation Centre, Nanyang Technical University, Singapore: Wang's career has included leadership positions at Sikorsky and AgustaWestland/Leonardo, developing advanced rotorcraft and other VTOL systems, for which he received eight patents. He has been an ardent supporter and contributor to VFS, including educating and inspiring the next generation of VTOL engineers.

The title of **Technical Fellow** is granted to Society members whose career-based accomplishments towards the goals and objectives of the vertical flight technical community constitute an outstanding technical achievement. The 2021 Technical Fellows are:

- **Dr. Andreas (Andy) P.F. Bernhard**, Director of Aircraft Design Engineering, Sikorsky, a Lockheed Martin Company: Bernhard's 25+ year career in research and development in helicopter design has

made notable advances in active rotor control, active vibration control, model-scale and full-scale wind tunnel testing, health and usage monitoring, and prognostics, resulting in five patents.

- **Dr. D. Douglas (Doug) Boyd, Jr.**, Senior Aerospace Engineer, NASA Langley Research Center: Boyd is a world-class authority on aeroacoustics computational modeling for vertical lift vehicles, and his research is internationally recognized as some of the most significant in this field.
- **Arnaud Le Pape**, Director of the Helicopter Program at the *Office National d'Etudes et de Recherches Aérospatiales* (ONERA) — The French Aerospace Lab. Le Pape's 20-year technical career has significantly advanced the state of the art in rotorcraft aeromechanics research, fostered international cooperation, and provided exemplary leadership in the planning and execution of rotorcraft research.
- **Dr. Jayant Sirohi**, Professor, Eli H. Ramona Thornton Centennial Fellow, University of Texas at Austin: Sirohi's pioneering contributions over 20 years on the theory and application of smart sensors and actuators in vertical lift, and experimental research of coaxial rotor systems, have greatly expanded and enriched the body of knowledge.

The **John J. Schneider Historical Achievement Award** is given in recognition of distinguished achievements by an individual in encouraging appreciation of, and enhancing access to, the history and legacy of vertical flight aircraft. This year's recipient is **Paul J. Fardink**, who has made significant contributions to documenting rotorcraft history — particularly focused on developments by the US Army — through dozens of papers and articles, and by supporting the recognition of three VFS Vertical Flight Heritage Sites.

The **François-Xavier Bagnoud Award** is given to an individual Society member under the age of 35 for career-to-date outstanding contributions to vertical flight technology. This year's winner is **Dr. Michael Jones** in the Rotorcraft Department of the Institute of Flight Systems at the *Deutsches Zentrum für Luft- und Raumfahrt e.V.* (DLR) — The German Aerospace Center, for his innovative research in the fields of modeling and simulation, handling qualities and simulation fidelity.

The Society's **Paul E. Haueter Award** is given for an outstanding technical contribution to the field of VTOL aircraft development other than a helicopter or an operational vertical flight aircraft. The 2021 Haueter Award is awarded to **John W. Piasecki**, President and CEO of Piasecki Aircraft Corporation. Over his 35-year career, he has led the company's many innovative projects, most of which have been focused on novel VTOL research, development and flight demonstration programs to extend VTOL performance and capabilities beyond that of conventional helicopters.

VFS announced in January that Fabio Nannoni was selected for the prestigious 2021 Alexander A. Nikolsky Honorary Lectureship, awarded to “an individual who has a highly distinguished career in vertical flight aircraft research and development and is skilled at communicating technical knowledge and experience.” Nannoni is the Senior Vice President for Safety Management Governance for the Leonardo Company's Helicopter Division, based in Cascina Costa, Italy. This, the 41st Annual Nikolsky Lecture, will be entitled, “Rotorcraft Design: The Crucial Influence of Safety from Concept to Fleet Support.”

The Vertical Flight Society will separately announce the winners of its group awards for 2021, which, along with the Nikolsky Award, will also be honored at the 77th Annual VFS Awards Ceremony on May 5, 2021. Descriptions of the awards and past recipients are available at [www.vtol.org/awards](http://www.vtol.org/awards).

The Vertical Flight Society was founded as the American Helicopter Society in 1943 by the pioneers of the helicopter industry, who believed that technological cooperation and collaboration was essential to advance vertical flight. VFS is the global non-profit society for engineers, scientists and others working on vertical flight technology. For more than 75 years, the Society has led technology, safety, advocacy, and other important initiatives, and has been the primary forum for interchange of information on vertical flight technology.

**The Vertical Flight Society**  
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