



Press Release

Contact:

Valerie Sheehan
703-684-6777 x107
pr@vtol.org

AHS International Announces 2018 Recipients of Its Group Awards
Eight organizations recognized for outstanding contributions to vertical flight

Fairfax, VA, March XX, 2018 — AHS International, *The Vertical Flight Society*, today announced the organizations that are the 2018 recipients of its prestigious awards program. This year's winners will be recognized at the Grand Awards Banquet on Wednesday, May 16, 2018, during AHS International's **74th Annual Forum & Technology Display** in Phoenix, Arizona, USA.

“Since 1943, AHS has brought together the world's leading individuals and organizations to help to advance the state of the art of vertical flight technology,” said AHS Executive Director Mike Hirschberg. “For nearly 75 years, AHS has highlighted the most impressive accomplishments in vertical flight, and we are especially proud of the groups who are recognized as part of this year's awardees.”

The Society's **Captain William J. Kossler, USCG Award** is given for the greatest achievement in the practical application or operation of vertical flight aircraft, the value of which has been demonstrated by actual service during the preceding 18 months. This year, the Kossler Award is being presented to crew of **Detachment 1, Bravo Company, 1st Battalion, 169th Aviation Regiment, General Support Aviation Battalion (GSAB), Georgia National Guard** supporting hurricane relief efforts in Puerto Rico. Bravo Company self-deployed two Chinooks from Savannah, Georgia, to the island stricken by Hurricane Maria. During Oct. 14-21, 2017, the crews flew 67.5 hours carrying 1,045 sandbags weighing 3,000 lb (1,350 kg) each. In total, Bravo Company flew over 2.6 million pounds (1,200 metric tons) of cargo over 36 days. Their efforts were vital in supporting operations to restore power and water to the island after the monster hurricane.

The **Grover E. Bell Award** is given for an outstanding research and experimentation contribution to the field of vertical flight development. This year's recipient is the **Clean Sky Green Rotorcraft (GRC) Rotor Design Team**. In just 30 months, the five-nation Airbus team developed, built and flight tested a five-bladed passive rotor optimized for acoustics, performance, comfort and cost. The resulting multi-disciplinary optimized rotor was flight tested on the Bluecopter demonstrator and achieved well-balanced improvements simultaneously in all of these categories. Particularly remarkable was the unprecedented low external noise signature. The GRC rotor design does not require any vibration isolation, thus reducing complexity, weight and cost, while providing excellent comfort and considerably higher speed and payload.

Rossell Techsys is this year's recipient of the AHS International **Supplier Excellence Award**. This award is given to a supplier who, through the quality, innovativeness and cost-effective technology of its products, has made a notable contribution to improving the state of the art of vertical flight aircraft. Rossell, based in Bengaluru, India, is one of Boeing's elite “Gold” rated suppliers and a past Supplier of the Year, providing wiring harnesses and related electrical work packages for Boeing's rotorcraft

programs. Boeing's Director of International Supplier Management noted that "Rossell Techsys is still early on [their] journey, but they have already made history at Boeing as a key partner on our platforms." The development and growth of Rossell over the last five years from a small point-to-point wire harness manufacturer to a complex wire harness and electrical panel powerhouse gives manufacturers confidence in outsourcing electrical wire work."

The **Leonardo International Fellowship Award** recognizes significant contributions to international vertical flight cooperation. This year's winner is the **Canadian Maritime Helicopter Combined Test Force Team** — comprised of members of the Canadian Department of National Defense (DND) and Sikorsky Aircraft, a Lockheed Martin Company. The team is recognized for conducting an extraordinary, international cooperative effort to demonstrate the CH-148 Cyclone helicopter shipboard capability for conducting flight operations in Sea State 6 conditions. This required the safe expansion of the Cyclone flight envelope on board a Canadian frigate in conditions up to 20 foot (6 m) waves and 55 knot (100 km/h) winds. Sikorsky noted that "This is likely the most challenging test environment ever faced by a combined Industry and Government flight test team."

The **Robert L. Pinckney Award** is given in recognition of notable achievement in manufacturing research and development for vertical flight aircraft or components. This year's recipient is the US Naval Air Systems Command (NAVAIR)/Sikorsky Aircraft **CH-53K Drive System Development Team**, which developed the largest helicopter main gearbox in the Western world. The CH-53K Split Torque Gearbox has been brought to fruition, through successful flight demonstration and customer operational assessment of heavy lift helicopter with an unprecedented vertical heavy lift capability for the US Marines.

The **Harry T. Jensen Award** is given for an outstanding contribution to the improvement of reliability, maintainability, safety or logistics support through improved design or technical achievement. This year's award is given for the **Combat Tempered Platform Demonstration Team**. Sikorsky Aircraft and the US Army's ADD for bringing to fruition an integrated suite of safety and reliability technologies that can be realistically implemented together that exemplifies both operational durability and total survivability. The team successfully demonstrated via full-scale ground and flight testing an optimized configuration of reliability and safety enhancing technologies which will save lives and allow aircraft to operate for extended periods with minimal maintenance.

This year's recipient of the **Howard Hughes Award**, given in recognition of an outstanding improvement in fundamental helicopter technology brought to fruition in the previous 18 months, is the **AACUS Development Team**. The Office of Naval Research and Aurora Flight Sciences Autonomous Aerial Cargo/Utility System (AACUS) team — which also included Near Earth Autonomy, Kutta Technologies, Rockwell Collins and Carnegie Mellon University — developed and successfully demonstrated a fully autonomous helicopter flight capability. Over the course of ONR's five-year long Innovative Naval Prototype (INP) project, the AACUS team designed a hardware and software applique "kit" that enables the host helicopter platform to interpret and execute high-level logistics mission tasks.

The **Vertical Flight Heritage Sites Program** is intended to recognize and help preserve locations with the most noteworthy and significant contributions made in both the theory and practice of helicopter and other VTOL aircraft technology. This year, two sites were selected for their historic significance:

- The **Daniel Guggenheim School of Aerospace Engineering at Georgia Institute of Technology** in Atlanta, Georgia, USA, was founded in 1930 through a grant via a Guggenheim Aeronautics Grant. The first chair, Montgomery Knight, introduced rotorcraft engineering from the department's inception, resulting in one of the first universities in the United States to offer a

formal education in the field. In 1982, the School of Aerospace Engineering was awarded one of the original three Rotorcraft Centers of Excellence.

- **Weston-super-Mare Airport** in Somerset, Great Britain, has been involved with helicopters since Bristol Aeroplane Company Chief Helicopter designer Raoul Hafner temporarily located his office there in 1945. Bristol built its Sycamore helicopter there from 1955-59 and carried out the first flight of the Belvedere tandem-rotor helicopter on the airfield in July 1958. The factory became the Weston division of Westland Helicopters in 1960 and was involved in Wasp, Gazelle, Puma, Lynx and Sea King production and overhaul work until its closure in 2002. Today, the Helicopter Museum, which opened on the property in 1989, keeps the heritage of the site alive.

More information about our 2018 awards winners can be found at www.vtol.org/2018-awards.

Founded as the American Helicopter Society, Inc. in 1943, AHS International, *The Vertical Flight Society*, is now the global resource for information on vertical flight technology. The Society advocates, promotes and supports global vertical flight technology and professional development.

AHS International — *The Vertical Flight Society*
2701 Prosperity Avenue, Suite 210, Fairfax, VA 22031 USA
phone: 1-703-684-6777; toll free: 1-855-AHS-INTL; fax: 1-703-739-9279
email: staff@vtol.org; website: www.vtol.org