



# Press Release

## For Immediate Release

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### AHS International Announces 2015 Recipients of its Prestigious Awards

**Fairfax, VA, March 13, 2015** — AHS International – *The Vertical Flight Technical Society* – today announced the 2015 recipients of its prestigious awards program, which has, since its establishment in 1944, paid tribute to the outstanding leaders of vertical flight and served as a catalyst for stimulating technological advances. This year’s winners will be recognized at the Grand Awards Banquet on Wednesday, May 6, 2015 during AHS International’s **71st Annual Forum and Technology Display** in Virginia Beach, Virginia, USA.

“The incredible accomplishments by the engineers, scientists and leaders who advance vertical flight technology and by the skilled pilots and crews who operate their products is staggering,” said Ed Birtwell, Vice President of GE Aviation and this year’s Chair of the Board of AHS International. “The AHS International Awards Program has very high standards. Those recognized today are truly outstanding examples of the best that the technical and operational communities have to offer.”

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 AHS International and the vertical flight community during their career. Recipients receive lifetime membership in the Society. The AHS bylaws limit the award of Honorary Fellows to no more than two individuals per year. The 2015 Honorary Fellows are:

- **Dr. Michael S. Torok** is the Vice President for the CH-53K Program at Sikorsky Aircraft. He has been an active AHS member since 1986 and has made exceptional leadership, innovative and technical contributions in the advancement and development of rotary wing aircraft over a career spanning more than 25 years.
- **Tommie L. Wood** is the Senior Technical Fellow at Bell Helicopter. Having worked at Bell for 50 years, Wood has been a key figure in all major development programs undertaken at the company in the past decades, contributing numerous and significant innovations in the field, as well as mentoring generations of rotary wing engineers. Wood has also been a longtime leader in AHS, having joined in 1967.

The **AHS Technical Fellow Awards** are granted to Society members whose career-based accomplishments towards the goals and objectives of the vertical flight technical community constitute an outstanding technical achievement. This year’s recipients are as follows:

- **Dr. Friedrich K. Straub**, Senior Manager of Dynamics Technology / Technical Fellow – The Boeing Company
- **Dr. Hyeonsoo Yeo**, Research Scientist – U.S. Army Aviation Development Directorate

- **Prof. Marilyn J. Smith**, Professor – Georgia Institute of Technology
- **Prof. Norman Wereley**, Professor – University of Maryland
- **William Welsh**, Technical Fellow, Dynamics – Sikorsky Aircraft Corporation

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 year. This year, the Kossler Award is being presented to two groups for their life-saving heroics:

- **The U.S. Army 2nd Battalion 501st Aviation Regiment** for conducting missions in Liberia to ease suffering and combat the deadly Ebola outbreak.
- **The Crew of United States Coast Guard Helicopter 6029** for rescuing a seriously injured ice climber in the Cascade Mountains in central Washington State. The crew's heroic nighttime rescue in at 1 mile (1.6 km) above sea level was followed by extraction through dense fog and icing conditions.

Michigan-based **KUKA Systems Corporation Aerospace Group** is this year's recipient of the **AHS 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. This year's award is for the company's extraordinary performance as the tooling integrator for the assembly of the Bell Helicopter 525 Relentless. KUKA transcended the role of a Tooling Integrator and became more than a supplier on the 525 program; they became a true partner in all phases of the program.

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 Hub Mounted Vibration Suppressor Design and Test Team**, comprising the U.S. Army, LORD Corporation and Sikorsky Aircraft. The team successfully demonstrated the ability of the HMVS to provide enhanced vibration suppression compared to the legacy passive systems, with significantly less weight, and paving the way for a jet-smooth ride on both legacy and future aircraft with active rotor control.

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 presented to the **V-22 Structural Appraisal of Fatigue Effects (SAFE) Team**, a joint US Naval Air Systems Command (NAVAIR)/Bell Boeing effort to improve V-22 safety, reliability and maintainability through a data-based determination of fatigue life expended on critical components. Some structural components are seeing a three-fold increase in life.

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 year, is Sikorsky's **MATRIX Technology** for advanced rotorcraft autonomy. In 2014, Sikorsky's MATRIX team achieved completely autonomous flight with an S-76 helicopter, including takeoff, path planning, navigation to the objective, and landing zone selection.

The **AgustaWestland International Fellowship Award** recognizes the significant contributions to international vertical flight cooperation. This year's winner is **William E. Chiles**, founder and chairman of HeliOffshore and formerly the CEO of the Bristow Group. Chiles has long been a leading advocate for personnel safety. He drove a safety culture within his company, and by working in partnership with the manufacturers, his customers, and his competitors, demonstrated a commitment to safety that has become the industry standard.

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 **S-97 Raider Helicopter Fuselage Development Team**, with members from Sikorsky Aircraft and Aurora Flight Sciences. The Team demonstrated the viability of designing, tooling, manufacturing and assembling a rotorcraft fuselage that is 70% composite (by weight) in a rapid prototyping environment.

The Society's **Paul E. Haueter Award** is presented each year for significant contributions to the development of vertical take-off and landing aircraft (VTOL) other than helicopters. The 2015 Haueter Award is being presented to **Ron Kisor**, Bell Helicopter's chief engineer on the Bell Boeing V-22 Osprey. Over a career at Bell spanning more than a quarter century, Kisor's technical contributions and leadership have been instrumental in the success of the tiltrotor.

This year's **François-Xavier Bagnoud Award** is given to **Andrea Chavez** of Bell Helicopter. This award is given to an individual Society member under the age of 35 for their career-to-date outstanding contributions to vertical flight technology. Through several test programs at Bell, Chavez has built a strong technical background in helicopter propulsion systems, and is a powerful advocate for engineering through pre-college outreach efforts.

The **John J. Schneider Historical Achievement Award** is given in recognition of distinguished achievement by an individual in encouraging appreciation of, and enhancing access to, the history and legacy of vertical flight aircraft. This year's recipient is **David Gibbings**. Gibbings retired from Westland in 1993 as the Chief Flight Test Engineer after 44 years in aviation. Since then, he has been actively engaged as a consultant, aviation artist, author and lecturer. He has written several histories of Westland aircraft.

**Franklin D. Harris** is this year's honored recipient of the **Dr. Alexander Klemin Award**, the highest honor the AHS bestows on an individual for notable achievement in advancing the field of vertical flight aeronautics. Harris is an eminent aeronautical engineer, educator and author with a half-century of contributions to vertical flight.

The **Frederick L. Feinberg Award** is presented to the pilot or crew of a vertical flight aircraft who demonstrated outstanding skills or achievement during the preceding year. This year's award is given to the crew of a **Colorado Army National Guard High Altitude Aviation Test Site (HAAS) Black Hawk** who performed back-to-back rescues of injured mountaineers. Two climbers were severely injured in unrelated mountaineering accidents on two of Colorado's 14,000 ft (4.3 km) peaks.

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 the committee has selected two sites to be recognized for their historic significance.

- **NASA Langley Research Center** (Hampton, Virginia, USA): Langley Research Center has had a long and distinguished history in powered lift technology development. This research has formed the foundation of knowledge for the powered lift community worldwide. Since the dedication of Langley in 1920, it has contributed to the understanding, design, analysis, and flight test development of experimental and production vertical flight configurations.
- **Piasecki/Vertol/Boeing "Morton" Site** (Springfield, Pennsylvania, USA): On this site, from March 1947, Piasecki Helicopter Corp. developed its tandem rotor helicopters, the XHRP-X / HRP-1 Rescuer, the HUP Retriever and H-21 Workhorse/Shawnee. As Vertol, the company continued development of the tandem helicopter, resulting in what would become the Boeing CH-46 Sea Knight and the CH-47 Chinook.

AHS International previously announced that **Dr. Robert A. Ormiston** was selected for the 2015 **Alexander A. Nikolsky Honorary Lectureship**, also to be presented at the AHS Annual Awards Banquet.

No award is being given this year for the **Igor I. Sikorsky International Trophy**, as there were no submissions in this category. The award is given to a company or consortium that designs and builds a helicopter establishing an official world record during the preceding year in the official E-1 categories prescribed by the rules of the Fédération Aéronautique Internationale.

The American Helicopter Society (AHS) International is the world's premier vertical flight technical society. Since its inception in 1943, AHS has been a major force in the advancement of vertical flight. It provides global leadership for scientific, technical, educational and legislative initiatives that advance the state of the art of vertical flight. Descriptions of each of the awards and past recipients are available on the Society's website at [www.vtol.org/awards](http://www.vtol.org/awards).

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