



Press Release

For Immediate Release

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Forum 69 Surpasses Expectations in Advancing Vertical Flight

ALEXANDRIA, Virginia (May 28, 2013): AHS International – *The Vertical Flight Technical Society* – has concluded a very successful 69th Annual Forum and Technology Display. The Forum's unmatched program of innovative discussions, exhibits, technical briefings and awards presentations drew together current and future vertical flight leaders to address the challenges of advancing rotorcraft applications throughout the world.

"Since our Society was founded 70 years ago, our Annual Forum has provided an unequalled opportunity for government, industry and academia to work together to tackle the toughest challenges in vertical flight," said AHS International Executive Director Mike Hirschberg. "This year's event surpassed all expectations and demonstrates that we and our members are committed to continuing that important tradition. We look forward to doing so again at our 70th Annual Forum next year in Montreal."

Forum 69 drew 1,100 attendees from 18 countries, as well as cutting edge exhibits from more than 60 exhibitors as part of the Technology Display. The event, held May 21-23 in Phoenix, Arizona, built on the strength of past programs by adding new topics of debate and discussion. This year's event included the perennial highlights of a panel discussion among CEOs and senior executives of top rotorcraft manufacturers, and briefings from U.S. Army and Navy vertical flight program leaders.

New program highlights included a May 22 panel discussion among researchers, manufacturers and civilian operators on the challenges of reducing helicopter noise and noise complaints and a May 23 discussion on how regulators and manufacturers can better meet the technological requirements of civilian operators. Those panel discussions were among Forum 69's 40-plus special session presentations, which augmented the briefings of more than 225 technical papers on the latest vertical flight research and innovations.

In keeping with Forum 69's theme of "Advancing Vertical Flight Technology in Demanding Environments," organizers overcame the challenge of stringent U.S. government travel constraints that prevented all but 50 government employees from attending. This included most of the Army and Navy program leaders, who nonetheless updated attendees via video-conference; this solution was very well received, with more than 100 attendees in each session. The respective heads of the Army's and Navy's rotary wing aviation programs, Maj. Gen. Tim Crosby and Rear Adm. Paul Grosklags, personally led the military briefings by their program managers.

The lead-up to Forum 69 included two forward-looking events on May 20. A short course on rotorcraft modeling and simulation also explored the roles that these tools and expertise can

play in the burgeoning wind energy industry, building on wind energy technical sessions at the Forum. Another special session later on May 20 featured updates from members of three teams competing for the \$250,000 prize offered for the AHS Igor I. Sikorsky Human Powered Helicopter Competition (see www.vtol.org/hph). The teams were from AeroVelo in Toronto, Ontario, Canada; California State Polytechnic University – San Luis Obispo (Cal Poly); and the University of Maryland.

In another look toward the future, on May 21, the Micro Air Vehicle Student Challenge pitted five student-researcher teams in a competition for up to \$3,000 in prizes sponsored by Sikorsky Aircraft Corporation. The teams included two from the University of Maryland and one each from the University of Texas at Austin, Arizona State University and The Pennsylvania State University.

UT Austin's Phoenix V team won a \$1,000 prize for Best Manual Challenge Execution, which entailed flying line of sight to a target and then doing a sensor-guided, remotely operated hover over target. Penn State's Gnittany Gnat team won the Best Poster Presentation Award of \$500. The challenge for an autonomous target acquisition and hover was not claimed this year. Prizes not awarded this year will be reserved to encourage practical and technological pursuits by next year's competitors. The competition was conducted by AHS International's Unmanned VTOL Aircraft & Rotorcraft Committee. The committee hopes that the annual MAV Student Challenges will lead to advances in this area and help to develop increased expertise by students and universities.

On May 22, AHS International honored vertical flight leaders, presenting 11 awards and six honorary and technical fellowships for technological and industry advancements. In addition, \$50,000 in scholarships were presented to 21 of the world's most talented and deserving engineering students as part of this year's Vertical Flight Foundation (VFF) scholarship program. You can find details for Society's award winners and scholarship recipients at www.vtol.org/press-releases. Go to www.vtol.org/news/forum-69-photos for Forum 69 photos.

AHS International's 70th Annual Forum and Technology Display will be held May 20-22, 2014 at the Palais des Congrès de Montréal, in Montreal, Quebec, Canada.

About AHS International

AHS International celebrated its 70th anniversary in February. Founded in 1943 as the American Helicopter Society, it is the world's premier professional vertical flight technical society. Based in Alexandria, Virginia, AHS International has more than 6,000 members in 44 countries, including the world's leading vertical flight manufacturers, suppliers and education and research institutions. Among the Society's members are engineers, scientists, corporate executives, civilian and military program managers, pilots, safety specialists, students, and leaders in manufacturing, production, purchasing, procurement and maintenance.

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