



# Press Release

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**Vertical Flight Society Announces 2021 Lichten Award Winners**  
*Selected for Technical Excellence from First-Time Technical Paper Presenters*

**Fairfax, Virginia, April 13, 2021** — The Vertical Flight Society today announced the winners of its prestigious Robert L. Lichten technical award. The overall winner will be recognized on Wednesday, May 5, 2021, during the Society's 77th Annual Grand Awards Ceremony, premiering at 2:00 pm EDT (UTC-4), on the Society's YouTube channel: [www.YouTube.com/VTOLsociety](http://www.YouTube.com/VTOLsociety).

**Mr. Andrew Lavoie of Sikorsky, a Lockheed Martin Company**, was selected as the overall Lichten Winner. His winning paper, "*Variational Tolerance Analysis (VTA) – Design and Manufacturing Optimization using Statistical Simulation*," will be presented at Forum 77 on Monday, May 10, during the Manufacturing & Technology technical session. Mr. Lavoie was also the winner of the VFS Northeast US Region Lichten Competition.

**Mr. Joseph Heimerl from Texas A&M University** was selected as the Lichten Runner-up for his paper, "*Experimental and Computational Investigation of a UAV-Scale Cycloidal Rotor*." His paper will be presented during the Advanced Vertical Flight II technical session taking place on Wednesday, May 12. Mr. Heimerl will also receive a runner-up certificate. He was the VFS Southwest US Region Lichten winner.

In addition, **Mr. James Sutherland of University of Maryland** was the winner of the VFS Southeast US Region with his paper, "*Design, Fabrication, and Modeling of Swept-Tip Tiltrotor Blades*." His paper will be presenting during the Forum 77 Dynamics I session on Tuesday, May 11.

The Robert L. Lichten Award was established in 1976 to encourage VFS members who have not previously presented the results of their work at a technical meeting to begin to do so through presentations at local and regional VFS meetings. Each of the ten regions around the world is eligible to select a regional winner to enter into the international competition, from which an overall winner and runner up are selected. The overall Lichten Award Winner is invited to present his/her technical paper at the Forum and receives complimentary travel to and lodging at the Forum, as well as a \$500 honorarium, sponsored by Bell Textron, Inc. The runner-up is also invited to present at the Forum and receives a certificate and complimentary Forum registration.

The Lichten Award honors the memory of Robert L. Lichten, an outstanding rotary-wing engineer and the 22<sup>nd</sup> VFS President (1965-1966). Lichten was a skilled and dedicated innovator who spent much of his career championing early tiltwing and tiltrotor concepts. He was considered the “Pioneer of Tilt Rotor Technology” for his work at Bell, where he became the director of advanced technology.

The Grand Awards Ceremony is one of the highlights of the Society’s 77th Annual Forum & Technology Display, taking place virtually this year from May 10-14, 2021. For more details on this, the world’s largest and longest-running vertical flight technical event, see [www.vtol.org/forum](http://www.vtol.org/forum).

Founded as the American Helicopter Society in 1943, the Vertical Flight Society 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 technical, 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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