Press Release

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VFS Appoints Adithya Ramaswami as Chair of DBVF Student Competition

Fairfax, Virginia, USA, Aug. 5, 2024 — The Vertical Flight Society (VFS), the world's leading non-profit organization working to advance vertical flight, today announces that Adithya Ramaswami has been appointed to serve as Chair of the Design-Build-Vertical Flight (DBVF) Student Competition, effective Aug. 1, 2024.

The DBVF Student Competition is a global challenge that aims to encourage university students to explore and develop hands-on skills and knowledge of electric vertical takeoff and landing (eVTOL) and uncrewed aircraft system (UAS) technology, preparing the next generation of engineers and leaders to push the boundaries of this transformative field.

As Chair, Ramaswami will implement strategies to continue to strengthen and empower student talent and the future eVTOL and UAS workforce. He will be responsible for overseeing the competition's planning and execution, technical oversight of the request for proposal (RFP), and working with partners, faculty, and academic institutions to broaden VFS's impact on student experiential learning.

"Adithya's expertise in drone technology and his commitment to innovation make him an ideal leader for the DBVF Student Competition," said Angelo Collins, Executive Director of VFS. "We are excited to see how his vision and leadership will inspire the next generation of vertical flight engineers."

Ramaswami is a graduate of The Ohio State University with a B.S. in Aerospace Engineering, and currently serves as the CEO and founder of ParaWave, a US drone technology company developing cutting-edge tools for first responders to save lives in critical situations. Ramaswami's passion and experience in the drone space will be fully leveraged in his new role as Chair.

The Society thanks Dr. Jason Cornelius, Penn State University (PSU) Vertical Lift Research Center of Excellence (VLRCOE) graduate, NASA engineer and outgoing DBVF Chair for

establishing the competition and fostering its growth over the last four years. We look forward to his continued involvement on the DBVF Committee.

“It takes a village to nurture innovation, and with the UAS and eVTOL industry rapidly evolving, the importance of inspiring the next generation of problem solvers and innovators cannot be overstated,” said Ramaswami. “I look forward to working with Vertical Flight Society’s leadership and community to support and empower countless students across the globe. Thank you to Jason for his outstanding leadership these past four years, and I am excited for the future impact of this competition.”

Last year’s DBVF student competition was a great success. Of the original 16 teams that entered the competition in October, nine teams flew a wide range of exotic aircraft designs at the culminating flyoff event at SURVICE Engineering in Churchville, Maryland, on April 10–12, 2024. Texas A&M University took first place, University of Maryland took second and the Georgia Institute of Technology took third. VFS awarded a total of more than $5,000 in the competition.

The 2024–2025 DBVF RFP will be released later this summer. More information on the competing teams and competition requirements can be found at www.vtol.org/fly.

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 80 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.

VFS is @VTOLsociety on social media: Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, Twitter, Vimeo and YouTube.

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