

VIPC Celebrates Virginia Unmanned Systems Leaders Recognized as Nations Best by AUVSI's "XCELLENCE Awards"

Award nominees will showcase their technology and programs at the VIPC Virginia Pavilion as part of the AUVSI Xponential International Conference in Denver, CO.

RICHMOND, VIRGINIA, UNITED STATES, May 3, 2023 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Several companies, organizations and individuals from Virginia have been

named finalists for the XCELLENCE Award, the recognition by the Association of Uncrewed Vehicle Systems International (AUVSI) for outstanding accomplishments in unmanned systems technology. The winners will be announced at AUVSI's annual Xponential international conference and exhibition, which is taking place in Denver on May 8 to 11. Many of the Virginians

named XCELLENCE Award finalists will be participating in the [Virginia Pavilion](#), which the Unmanned Systems Center at the Virginia Innovation Partnership Corporation ([VIPC](#)) is hosting at Xponential.

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Tracy Tynan, Director, The Virginia Unmanned Systems Center at VIPC

“These award finalists represent the exciting innovation and advancement in the international unmanned systems industry,” Tracy Tynan, the Director of the [Virginia Unmanned Systems Center at VIPC](#) said. “VIPC congratulates all the award finalists, and we are happy to celebrate that many of them are based in Virginia. We’re looking forward to hosting the Virginia finalists at our pavilion at Xponential, where they will showcase the work that enabled them to make the final round of the

XCELLENCE Awards.”

The XCELLENCE Awards finalists from Virginia are:

Robert Briggs, the chief engineer of the Mid-Atlantic Aviation Partnership (MAAP) at Virginia Tech



University in Blacksburg, for XCELLENCE in Academic Research. He led the team that developed the only Means of Compliance currently accepted by the Federal Aviation Administration for drone operations over people.

DRONERESPONDERS Public Safety Alliance, which is directed by Charles Werner, the retired fire chief of Charlottesville, for XCELLENCE in Public Safety. Droneresponders supported a process to expedite approvals for FAA waivers for Drone as a First Responder (DFR) and Special Governmental Interest (SGI) for first responders and other organizations responding to natural disasters or other emergency situations.

D-Fend Solutions, which has its North American headquarters in McLean, for XCELLENCE in Hardware and Systems Design. Its "EnforceAir" anti-drone product, features counter-drone, cyber, radio frequency (RF)-based takeover technology.

DroneUp of Virginia Beach, with partner Richard Bland College of Prince George County, for XCELLENCE in Workforce Development. Together, they established the first commercial drone workforce training program for college credit.

Laurel Ridge Community College, with multiple campuses in the Shenandoah Valley and Piedmont regions of Virginia, for "Laurels Take Flight," which is also in the XCELLENCE in Workforce Development category. Under the leadership of Dr. Melissa Stange and support from the Virginia Space Grant Consortium, the program is bringing unmanned aircraft systems to students and community, including webinars, camps, classes and grants for female students from kindergarten to college.

The Virginia Pavilion, which was planned and organized by VIPC, will feature leading companies and organizations from throughout the commonwealth that have helped make Virginia the nation's leading state for UAS business for two consecutive years. Joining MAAP, Droneresponders, and DroneUp at the pavilion participants will be Dominion Energy, the Virginia Institute for Spaceflight and Autonomy (VISA) at Old Dominion University, ATA, the Virginia Economic Development Partnership (VEDP) and the Public Safety Innovation Center (PSIC) at VIPC.

AUVSI, which is headquartered in Arlington, annually presents the XCELLENCE Awards to honor individuals and organizations that are innovators in the uncrewed systems industry, with a demonstrated commitment to advancing autonomy, leading and promoting safe adoption of uncrewed systems, and developing programs that use these technologies to save lives and improve society.

In addition to the XCELLENCE Awards ceremony, Xponential offers a broad-based and balanced educational program brimming with cutting-edge content and inspirational insights, ranging from policy implications and technical challenges to use cases and best practices across vertical markets and everything in between. The conference will be held at the Colorado Convention Center in Denver on May 8 to 11.

About Virginia Innovation Partnership Corporation (VIPC) VIPC: Connecting innovators with opportunities. As the nonprofit operations arm of the Virginia Innovation Partnership Authority (VIPA), VIPC is the commercialization and seed stage economic development driver in the Commonwealth that leads funding, infrastructure, and policy initiatives to support Virginia's innovators, entrepreneurs, startups, and market development strategies. VIPC collaborates with local, regional, state, and federal partners to support the expansion and diversification of Virginia's economy. Programs include: Virginia Venture Partners (VVP) | VVP Fund of Funds (SSBCI) | Virginia Founders Fund (VFF) | Commonwealth Commercialization Fund (CCF) | Petersburg Founders Fund (PFF) | Smart Communities | The Virginia Smart Community Testbed | The Virginia Unmanned Systems Center | Virginia Advanced Air Mobility Alliance (VAAMA) | The Public Safety Innovation Center | Entrepreneurial Ecosystems | Regional Innovation Fund (RIF) | Federal Funding Assistance Program (FFAP) for SBIR & STTR | University Partnerships | Startup Company Mentoring & Engagement. For more information, please visit www.VirginialPC.org. Follow VIPC on Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn.

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