



## ***News from the American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics!***



## **AIAA Announces 2023–2024 Section Award Winners**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**July 29, 2024 – Reston, Va.** – The American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics (AIAA) has announced its 2023–2024 section award winners. The section awards honor particularly notable achievements made by members of AIAA's 57 sections around the world in a range of activities that help fulfill the Institute's mission. Section awards are given annually in eight categories based on the size of each section's membership. Each winning section receives a certificate and a cash award. The award period is 1 June 2023–31 May 2024.

"Across AIAA, local sections are where the action begins. We believe that vital, active sections are essential to the Institute's success. Congratulations to these sections for their noteworthy achievements!" said AIAA CEO Dan Dumbacher.

The **Outstanding Section Award** is presented to sections based upon their overall activities and contributions through the year. The winners are:

### VERY SMALL

- **First Place:** Adelaide
- **Second Place:** Delaware
- **Third Place:** Melbourne

### SMALL

- **First Place:** Palm Beach

- **Second Place (tie):** Central Coast of California
- **Second Place (tie):** Northwest Florida
- **Third Place:** Wichita

## MEDIUM

- **First Place:** Illinois
- **Second Place:** Greater Philadelphia
- **Third Place:** Antelope Valley

## LARGE

- **First Place:** North Texas
- **Second Place:** Northern Ohio
- **Third Place:** St. Louis

## VERY LARGE

- **First Place:** Los Angeles
- **Second Place:** New England
- **Third Place:** Hampton Roads

The **Communications Award** is presented to sections that have developed and implemented an outstanding communications outreach program.

Winning criteria include level of complexity, timeliness, and variety of methods of communications, as well as frequency, format, and content of the communication outreach. The winners are:

## VERY SMALL

- **First Place: Point Lobos**, Jae-Jun Kim (Naval Postgraduate School), website editor
- **Second Place: Adelaide**, Patrick Neumann (Neumann Space), section

chair

- **Third Place: Delaware**, Zachary Gent (Northrop Grumman Defense Systems), membership officer

## SMALL

- **First Place: Long Island**, David Paris, section chair
- **Second Place: Central Coast of California**, Matthew Tanner (United States Space Force), communications officer
- **Third Place: Northwest Florida**, Micah Reese, secretary

## MEDIUM

- **First Place: Illinois**, Kenneth Brezinsky (University of Illinois at Chicago), secretary; Laura Villafañe Roca (University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign), section chair
- **Second Place: Carolina**, John Blanton (Classic Engineering LLC), section chair
- **Third Place: Phoenix**, Aiden Bramer (Northrop Grumman Space Systems), section chair

## LARGE

- **First Place: North Texas**, James Sergeant, section chair
- **Second Place: Northern Ohio**, Edmond Wong (NASA Glenn Research Center), communications officer
- **Third Place: San Gabriel Valley**, Sahangi Dassanayake (California Institute of Technology), communications officer

## VERY LARGE

- **First Place: Los Angeles**, Kenneth Lui (Ken's Consulting), section chair; Ian Clavio (Northrop Grumman Aeronautics Systems), university



education officer

- **Second Place: Hampton Roads (tie)**, Soumyo Dutta (NASA Langley Research Center), newsletter editor
- **Second Place: New England (tie)**, Aaryan Nagarkatti (Westboro HS Rocketry Association), social media officer; Shreyas Hegde (Pratt & Whitney), section chair
- **Third Place: Dayton-Cincinnati (tie)**, Oliver Leembruggen (Sumaria Systems), public policy officer
- **Third Place: Houston (tie)**, Joel Godinez (Harris County), website editor

The **Membership Award** is presented to sections that have supported their membership by planning and implementing effective recruitment and retention campaigns. The winners are:

## VERY SMALL

- **First Place: Adelaide**, Patrick Neumann (Neumann Space), section chair
- **Second Place: Delaware**, Zachary Gent (Northrop Grumman Defense Systems), membership officer
- **Third Place: Melbourne**, Bryan Aherne (consultant), membership officer; Jisoo Jeon (Boeing Aerostructures Australia); Julia Low (RMIT University), communications officer

## SMALL

- **First Place: Wichita**, Mary Drouin (Spirit AeroSystems Inc), membership officer
- **Second Place: Central Coast of California**, Matthew Tanner (United States Space Force), membership officer
- **Third Place: Northwest Florida**, Angela Diggs (Air Force Research

Laboratory), vice chair; Humberto Ramos (University of Florida), technical officer; Judith Sherrill, education officer; Crystal Pasiliao (Airforce SEEK EAGLE Office), STEM K-12 officer; Sunny Narayanan (Florida State University), young professionals officer

## MEDIUM

- **First Place: Illinois**, Andrew Touvannas (Woodward Inc.), honors and awards officer; David Carroll (CU Aerospace LLC), treasurer
- **Second Place: Greater Philadelphia**, Jonathan Moore (Lockheed Martin Space Systems), vice chair
- **Third Place: Tucson**, Andrew Alexander, membership officer

## LARGE

- **First Place: North Texas**, James Sergeant, section chair
- **Second Place: Northern Ohio**, Jonah Sachs-Wetstone (NASA Glenn Research Center), membership officer
- **Third Place: St. Louis**, Alexander Friedman (The Boeing Company), membership officer

## VERY LARGE

- **First Place: Hampton Roads**, Richard Winski (NASA Langley Research Center), membership officer; Julia Cline (NASA Langley Research Center), membership officer
- **Second Place: Los Angeles**, Sherry Stukes, membership officer
- **Third Place: New England**, Charlie Wilson, advisor; Shreyas Hegde (Pratt & Whitney), section chair

The **Public Policy Award** is presented for stimulating public awareness of the needs of aerospace research and development, particularly on the part

of government representatives, and for educating section members about the value of public policy activities. The winners are:

## VERY SMALL

- **First Place: Adelaide**, Patrick Neumann (Neumann Space), section chair
- **Second Place: Delaware**, Di Ena Davis, public policy officer
- **Third Place: Point Lobos**, Giovanni Minelli (Naval Postgraduate School), section chair

## SMALL

- **First Place: Palm Beach**, Shawna Christenson (Aerospace and Innovation Academy); Kevin Simmons (BLUECUBE Aerospace), public policy officers
- **Second Place: Northwest Florida**, Michael Kelton (U.S. Air Force), public policy officer
- **Third Place (tie): Long Island**, George Kyriakou (BotFactory Inc.), public policy officer
- **Third Place (tie): Twin Cities**, Cristin Finnigan (Northrop Grumman Space Systems), public policy officer

## MEDIUM

- **First Place: Greater Philadelphia**, Joi Spraggins (Legacy Bridges STEM Academy Inc.), diversity and inclusion officer
- **Second Place: Illinois**, Mordechai Levin, public policy officer

## LARGE

- **First Place: Northern Ohio**, Michael Heil (ML Heil Consulting LLC), technical officer

- **Second Place: North Texas**, James Sergeant, section chair
- **Third Place: San Diego**, Mike Curtin, public policy officer

## VERY LARGE

- **First Place: Hampton Roads**, Steven Dunn (Jacobs Technology Inc), public policy officer
- **Second Place: Los Angeles**, Daniel Scalese (University of Southern California), public policy officer
- **Third Place: Houston**, Svetlana Hanson (Metecs), programs officer

The **STEM K–12 Award** is presented to sections that have developed and implemented an outstanding STEM K–12 outreach program that provides quality education resources for K–12 teachers in the STEM subject areas. The winners are:

## VERY SMALL

- **First Place: Wisconsin**, Todd Treichel (Sierra Space), section chair
- **Second Place: Adelaide**, Rey Chin (University of Adelaide), university liaison officer
- **Third Place: Delaware**, Nicholas Rogers (Northrop Grumman Defense Systems), STEM K-12 officer

## SMALL

- **First Place: Palm Beach**, Kevin Simmons (BLUECUBE Aerospace); Shawna Christenson (Aerospace and Innovation Academy), STEM K-12 officers
- **Second Place: Northwest Florida**, Crystal Pasillao (Air Force SEEK EAGLE Office), STEM K-12 officer
- **Third Place: Central Coast of California**, Thomas Stevens (Space

Launch Delta 30), STEM K-12 officer

## MEDIUM

- **First Place: Illinois**, Pamela Greyer (NASA Aeronautics Education Laboratory), STEM K-12 officer
- **Second Place: Greater Philadelphia**, Christopher Reynolds (Lockheed Martin Space Systems), STEM K-12 officer
- **Third Place: Antelope Valley**, Robert Jensen (Sierra Lobo Inc), STEM K-12 officer

## LARGE

- **First Place: Cape Canaveral**, Melissa Sleeper (Holy Trinity Episcopal Academy), STEM K-12 officer
- **Second Place: St. Louis**, Jackie Blumer (Greenville Jr. High School), advisor
- **Third Place: Orange County**, Binay Pandey, STEM K-12 officer

## VERY LARGE

- **First Place: Los Angeles**, Arpie Ovsepyan (Herbert Hoover High School), STEM K-12 officer; Ian Clavio (Northrop Grumman Aeronautics Systems), STEM K-12 officer
- **Second Place: Rocky Mountain**, Trip Carter (Lockheed Martin Space Systems), education officer
- **Third Place: Hampton Roads**, Karen Berger (NASA Langley Research Center), STEM K-12 officer; Amanda Chou (Air Force Office of Scientific Research), STEM K-12 officer

The **Section-Student Branch Partnership Award** recognizes the most effective and innovative collaboration between the professional section

members and student branch members.

## VERY SMALL

- **First Place: Adelaide**, Rey Chin (University of Adelaide), university liaison officer; Michael Evans (University of South Australia), university liaison
- **Second Place: Melbourne**, Kaustubh Dongre (Boeing), student branch liaison
- **Third Place (tie): Wisconsin**, Todd Treichel (Sierra Space), section chair
- **Third Place (tie): Point Lobos**, Giovanni Minelli (Navel Post Graduate School), chair

## SMALL

- **First Place (tie): Palm Beach**, Kevin Simmons (BLUECUBE Aerospace), STEM K-12 officer
- **First Place (tie) Northwest Florida**, John Fey (Torch Technologies), education officer
- **Second Place: Wichita**, Linda Kliment (Wichita State University), education officer
- **Third Place: Central Coast of California**, Kyle Brezio (California Polytechnic State University), student branch liaison; Cassandra Herrera (California Polytechnic State University), student branch liaison

## MEDIUM

- **First Place: Illinois**, Laura Villafañe Roca (University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign), section chair; Matthew Brotnow (University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign), student branch chair
- **Second Place: Tucson**, John Allen (University of Arizona), student



branch liaison

- **Third Place: Greater Philadelphia**, Jonathan Moore (Lockheed Martin Space Systems), vice chair

## LARGE

- **First Place: North Texas**, Jason Daugherty (University of Texas at Arlington), student branch president; Kevin Debord (University of Texas at Dallas), student branch president
- **Second Place: St. Louis**, Mark Kammeyer (Boeing Test & Evaluation) education officer
- **Third Place: Northern Ohio**, Aaron Hensley (NASA Glenn Research Center), university liaison officer

## VERY LARGE

- **First Place: New England**, Charlie Wilson, advisor; Shreyas Hegde (Pratt & Whitney), section chair; James Wetzel (Charles Stark Draper Laboratory Inc.), young professionals officer; Anoop Kiran, student branch liaison
- **Second Place: Rocky Mountain**, Lynne George (University of Colorado at Colorado Springs), outreach officer
- **Third Place: National Capital**, Steven Brunetto (Booz Allen Hamilton), vice chair of operations

The **Young Professional Activity Award** is presented for excellence in planning and executing events that encourage the participation of the Institute's young professional members, and provide opportunities for leadership at the section, regional, or national level. The winners are:

## VERY SMALL

- **First Place: Delaware**, Taylor Coleman, young professionals officer
- **Second Place: Adelaide**, Daniel Kilonzo (University of Adelaide), vice chair
- **Third Place: Melbourne**, Kaja Antlej (Deakin University), section chair

## SMALL

- **First Place: Twin Cities**, Kristen Gerzina (Northrop Grumman Defense Systems), section chair
- **Second Place: Palm Beach**, Karl Roush (Georgia Institute of Technology), young professionals officer
- **Third Place: Northwest Florida**, Sunny Narayanan (Florida State University), young professionals officer

## MEDIUM

- **First Place: Greater Philadelphia**, Jamil Grant (NDI Engineering), section chair
- **Second Place: Antelope Valley**, Joseph Piotrowski (NASA Armstrong Flight Research Center), young professionals officer
- **Third Place: Tucson**: John Allen, young professionals officer

## LARGE

- **First Place: North Texas**, James Sergeant, section chair
- **Second Place: San Diego**, Laine D'Augustine (The MITRE Corporation), council member
- **Third Place: Northern Ohio**, Halle Buescher (NASA Glenn Research Center), vice chair; Santino Bianco (NASA Glenn Research Center), professional development chair

## VERY LARGE

- **First Place: Los Angeles**, Luis Cuevas (Lockheed Martin Aeronautics), young professional officer
- **Second Place: New England**, James Wetzel (Charles Stark Draper Laboratory), young professionals officer; Shreyas Hegde (Pratt & Whitney), section chair; Hiroaki Endo (Schenck USA Corporation Test Devices by Schenck), past chair and advisor
- **Third Place: Hampton Roads**, Kyle Thompson (NASA Langley Research Center); Drew Turbeville (NASA Langley Research Center), young professional officers

The **Outstanding Activity Award** allows the Institute to acknowledge sections that held an outstanding activity deserving of additional recognition. The winners are:

#### **VERY SMALL:**

- **Melbourne, AIAA Melbourne Section Monthly Gatherings.** In 2023, the AIAA Melbourne Section organized five hybrid Monthly Gatherings (initially titled as Meetings) at RMIT University City Campus and online as a Zoom meeting. The gatherings took place every third Wednesday or Thursday after work. Each one was dedicated to a different topic, presented by AIAA members or external speakers with vibrant Q&A sessions, and attendees both in person and online. The speakers came both from academia (professors and Ph.D. Candidates), industry (international corporations and SMEs), and NGOs. After every event, networking continued at a local restaurant. The following speakers presented at the events and received a printed AIAA certificate for attendance as a thank-you token — July 19, 2023: Grace Mei Ing Loke, It Smells Different Up Here – Food Odor Perception and Virtual Reality for Space Applications; August 23, 2023: Graham Dorrington, RMIT University, Why Support the Return to the Moon?, and Joseph Kenrick,

Lunar Outpost Oceania, the Australian Space Agency Trailblazer Lunar Rover Project and the ELO2 Consortium; September 20, 2023: Alan Sherwood, Senior Structural Analyst, Boeing Aerostructures Australia, The Strange Case of the Phantom Flaperon Flutter; October 25, 2023: Colin Campbell, General Manager, Applied Fasteners and Tooling (AFT), Our Journey Into Space; and November 22, 2023: Art Cotterell, University of Adelaide, From Space Debris to Space Resources: Contemporary Issues in Space Law.

- **Southern New Jersey, Southern New Jersey Professional Societies Awards Banquet.** The Southern New Jersey Professional Societies Annual Awards Banquet is an opportunity to recognize the accomplishments of the talented aviation professionals in South Jersey. This event is held in partnership with other professional societies, including the AIAA Southern New Jersey Section, IEEE, and NSBE. The 30 November 2023 awards ceremony included a keynote address by Bruce Webb of Airbus Helicopters. His speech on "Flying Blind" highlighted how humans may not perceive all the information available and how this contributes to aviation accidents and what can be done to mitigate this hazard. Award nominees were recognized, and awards were presented for Outstanding Engineer or Scientist, Outstanding Aviation Research, Outstanding Technical Leadership, Outstanding Contributions to Test or ATC, and Outstanding Young Professionals. After dinner, there was an opportunity for networking and enjoying time with colleagues.
- **Wisconsin, Rocket Science for Future Engineers.** The AIAA Wisconsin Section has leveraged the talent of its members to provide a variety of outreach opportunities for precollege-aged students, including hands-on demonstrations, visual aids, and real-life spaceflight examples. Bringing precollege-aged students face-to-face with space-

related science, designed hardware, technology, and its potential benefits increases interest in aerospace and space-related fields, inspiring students to pursue a STEM degree at university, followed by an aerospace career. The goal of the Advanced Rocket Science for Future Aerospace Engineers special initiative was to reach an underserved demographic using tools from AIAA and NASA's directorate for STEM outreach. In spring 2024 the section served a total of 16 students consisting of 4 females, 12 males, and 50% of this group were African American.

- **Delaware, Joint Speaker Exchange with Mid-Atlantic Section.** The AIAA Delaware and Mid-Atlantic sections hosted a speaker exchange, where each section sponsored a speaker to present a topic at a dinner meeting for members of both sections to join. It was hosted at a location central to both membership areas.

## **SMALL:**

- **Palm Beach, SmallSat Education Conference.** The SmallSat Education Conference, held at NASA Kennedy Space Center, is a dynamic event that brings together aerospace professionals and students to network, share knowledge, and collaborate on innovative projects. This conference serves as a pivotal platform for fostering connections between seasoned industry experts and the next generation of aerospace engineers and scientists. Participants at the conference engage in a variety of activities, including keynote speeches from leading aerospace professionals, technical workshops, and panel discussions. These sessions cover a wide range of topics related to small satellite (SmallSat) technology, offering insights into the latest advancements, challenges, and future trends in the field. Students have the unique opportunity to present their own SmallSat projects, receiving

feedback and mentorship from experienced professionals. This interaction not only enhances their technical skills but also provides valuable industry exposure and career guidance. Networking sessions and informal meet-and-greet events further facilitate meaningful exchanges, allowing participants to build lasting professional relationships. The conference's setting at Kennedy Space Center, a hub of space exploration and innovation, adds a significant inspirational element, motivating attendees to pursue ambitious goals in their aerospace careers. The SmallSat Education Conference is a cornerstone event that nurtures talent, encourages collaboration, and drives the future of aerospace technology.

- **Central Coast of California, 39th Annual Central Coast STEM Exposition.** The 39th Annual Central Coast STEM Expo, held 3-4 May at the Lompoc High School gymnasium and outdoor patio areas, supported 172 projects and over 200 students with the aid of over 60 judges and volunteers from across Vandenberg Space Force Base. Over \$1,700 in cash and plaques sponsored by local professional organizations and companies were awarded to the top scoring students at the awards reception attended by over 300 students, parents, teachers, and administrators. On Saturday, 4 May, two local For Inspiration & Recognition of Science and Technology (FIRST) Robotics Competition (FRC) teams from Arroyo Grande and Santa Ynez High Schools demonstrated their current robots to attendees. Also present were members of Darth Vader's 501st Legion in full costume regalia for photo ops. NRO OL Commander, Lt. Col. Ruth, was the keynote speaker and Clara Finneran, Superintendent, Lompoc Unified School District, welcomed the attendees. A partnered team of contractors, professional organizations, school district representatives, and base personnel come together annually to make this event a success. It was a great



successful team effort between the base and the Lompoc Unified School District!

- **Northern New Jersey, Careers in Aviation.** On 29 January 2024, the AIAA Northern New Jersey Section participated in the Careers in Aviation event for high school students, sponsored by the Morris Hills Regional District Aviation Program. 200 students and parents attended the event, where approximately 19 organizations set up tables and displays to discuss various career opportunities within the aviation industry. The AIAA Northern New Jersey Section had three volunteers available to discuss aerospace, AIAA benefits, and what could students consider doing at the different phases of their education, and at least 50 students visited to engage in conversations. We provided trinkets including Career in Aerospace brochures, student membership flyers, stress balls, pencils, stickers, and magnet clips. We also met up with a few professionals that we have previously engaged with at other events. The Morris Hills Regional District Aviation Program is in its infancy, and this was their first career event.
- **Sydney, Canberra Airport Open Day.** Canberra Airport Open Day is a community event that brings about 35,000 people over a day, mostly families. This year we had an incredible number of teenagers and tweens coming and talking to our members, three of whom are university professors and one hypersonics Ph.D. student. Our professors talked to the students and gave them quality advice on their studies and future, engaging their parents as well. We had more than one parent profusely thank us, as they got information which otherwise could not get from people in the industry. We count it as an outstanding event on the grounds of K-12 STEM Engagement, young people reached with career and study advice, and membership outreach with educators (we had few teachers come and talk to us).

## MEDIUM:

- **Illinois, AIAA UIUC Freshman Conference.** The AIAA UIUC Freshman Conference, held every year at the beginning of the semester, serves multiple purposes as it welcomes new students to the exciting world of aerospace engineering (AE); the AIAA organization, its values, its purpose and its history; the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign campus and resources; and the cohort of students that are part of the world of aerospace engineering. It is an essential event for student member recruiting. During this daylong event, students participate in talks by faculty and senior AE students, all members of AIAA, and are given lab tours and engage in hands-on activities, airplane competitions, CAD workshop, and tech project demos. Social events are also part of the schedule, which concludes with a movie night. This is a beautiful day, the first of four years, in which freshman students are given a sense of belonging to the community they chose to embrace, and AIAA is the host organization. The AIAA Illinois Section Chair, also UIUC faculty, is always one of the keynote speakers. In the last years, this event has evolved from a small student-led reception to an event receiving a large amount of time and attention from the section chair, assisting with logistics and ensuring the core values of AIAA are transmitted and the new cohort of students get the best possible presenters during the event. We hope future editions will be improved with AIAA merchandise and, if possible, invited speakers from outside the university.
- **Antelope Valley, E-Week History Symposium.** During this AIAA Antelope Valley event, four speakers presented on relevant history topics: Robert Wetherall - F-16 XL Story; Brian Duddy - Origins of the F-16 Program; James Goodall - An Inside Look at the Blackbird, and Cam Martin - Skyrocketing to Mach Two. The networking aspect of this event

is one of its best qualities, where everyone can meet new people and hang around with the speakers during and after the event. This symposium was held at the local Antelope Valley Community College, who has a long-standing relationship with the section that synergies our events and supports their students.

## LARGE

- **Northern Ohio, Young Astronauts Day.** On 18 November 2023, the 29th Annual Young Astronaut Day (YAD) event was held at the Cleveland Public Library's Main Library in downtown Cleveland. Over 150 1st–8th grade students along with over 60 chaperones participated in the Northern Ohio Section's STEM event. NASA's Orion European Service Module (ESM) Integration Office Deputy Manager, Katie Oriti, gave an inspiring keynote address on the Artemis I mission and her personal experiences with the program, including serving as a Mission Evaluation Room (MER) Manager for the mission. She shared footage of the ESM flying around the moon, shots of Snoopy bouncing around in the crew cabin and a final video of the crew module skipping off the atmosphere and safely landing in the ocean. As she explained what it takes to fly the ESM, she used interactive demonstration to teach concepts such as atmosphere skipping, thrust, and gravity led orbits. Oriti concluded by sharing a motivational video from Astronaut Komrade Bresnik who recorded a message just for the YAD students this year! During the afternoon, the students jumped right into the activity competition inspired by this year's theme, "Powering Through, Earth to Space." The students participated in two different grade categories: Pilots (1st–4th grade) and Mission Specialists (5th–8th grade). The pilot activities were: Remote Sensing (led by David Friedlander), Landing on the Moon (led by Kathy Tacina), and Safe Landing (led by the University of Akron Akronauts). The mission specialist activities were: Powered

and Pumped (led by Jerry Voltz), Lunar Rovers! Best Wheels! (led by the Fighting Unicorns Robotics team), and Lunar Prospector (led by Herb Schilling). The students also had the opportunity to interact with and learn about the Immaculate Heart of Mary (IHM) Middle School rocket team and their effort toward competing in the NASA Student Launch Initiative. The activities taught the students different science, engineering, and math concepts that relate to real-world applications in the aviation and space industries. YAD was a great success due to the tireless efforts of over 50 volunteers, including many regional engineers, students from local universities, the Akronauts, the Fighting Unicorns, and the IHM Rocket Team. Special thanks to the YAD planning committee including Emily Armbrust, Amber Waid, Jonathan Kratz, Edmond Wong, and Jonathan Davis, as well as the previously mentioned activity leads and all our volunteers.

- **North Texas, Moon Day STEM Event at Frontiers of Flight Museum, Dallas, TX.** Our unique STEM Moon Day program seeks to promote and educate young people about aerospace and AIAA. The hangar museum displays the Apollo 7 command module, a Southwest Airline 737, Vought heritage aircraft, and numerous other exhibits and activities. For Moon Day, the museum hosts STEM activities across the hangar floor and notable aerospace speakers in their auditorium, including last year featuring NASA Apollo 13 astronaut, Fred Haise. We bring a real F-35 sim (courtesy of Lockheed Martin) to Moon Day which is staffed by our volunteers and F-35 test pilots. We also feature our own STEM invention, the Flight Test Range, where kids design and build their own paper airplanes with the assistance of our members, fly them on the test range to measure time of flight and distance, then compute average flight speed and write the computations on their airplane that they take home with them. The Society of Flight Test Engineers (SFTE)

& Society of Experimental Test Pilots (SETP) are co-sponsors/participants. Test pilots and flight test engineers wear flight suits to add color to the event. Other engineers and students wear lab coats and their university shirts underneath to contribute to the technical, scholastic, and professional feel. F-35 test pilots explain the F-35 flying qualities and systems to the kids flying the simulator with parents taking lots of pictures. While waiting in line for the sim, our members engage the parents and kids in discussions about aerospace careers, education, and opportunities available to them, while sharing some of their own experiences. Boys and girls from different areas and backgrounds attend from all over North Texas and interact directly with our AIAA volunteers, many of whom are from the student branches and rocket teams we support. A strong effort is made to have young women and diverse representation at each station during the event to connect directly with the kids. Role models that look similar to the kids themselves are important to help them visualize an aerospace career. Parents are always so appreciative of our interaction and encouragement to their kids.

- **St. Louis, F/A-18 E1: From the Future of Naval Aviation to Nearly Forgotten Relic.** This dinner meeting at the St. Louis National Museum of Transportation (NMoT) was a celebration of the historic achievements of the F/A-18 E/F flight test program, which began in the 1990s, as well as the recent addition of the F/A-18 E1 flight test aircraft to museum. Prior to the meal, attendees enjoyed the museum displays both inside the hall and outside on the museum grounds where the subject aircraft is sited. Then the 130 attendees heard a talk by Tim Bischoff, a 40-year Boeing veteran who worked directly on the E1 aircraft as a flight test engineer in the early days of the program. Bischoff described the F/A-18 E/F program genesis and his role in flight

testing the E1 aircraft. He explained the significance of the contributions made by the E1 test program to the decades-long success of the overall program, described the fate of the jet once its airframe life was consumed, and narrated the persistent effort necessary to rescue the historic aircraft from destruction that resulted in its display at the NMoT. Many in the audience had personal involvement with the F/A-18 E/F project. At the conclusion a question/answer session addressed several topics raised by the engaged audience. Raffle tickets were sold for a large desktop display F/A-18 E model, and the drawing at the conclusion of the event made for an enthusiastic climax to the evening.

- **Cape Canaveral, SmallSat Education Conference.** In its second year, this two-day event brings together educators, administrators, and students at all levels from K-12 to university for a series of technical presentations, hands-on workshops, exhibitors, an art contest, and more, all centered around the theme of CubeSats and related technologies that enable students and others to access space. The event was held in the Astronaut Memorial Foundation Center for Space Education on the grounds of the Kennedy Space Center Visitors Center (as a perk, attendees got the chance to tour the Visitor's Center as part of their registration fee). The keynote speaker was Jose Núñez, NASA Kennedy Space Center (KSC) University Partnerships & Small Satellite Capabilities Manager. Numerous exhibitors were present, including NASA's Launch Services Program. Seven workshops were held with topics should as "Introduction to Machine Learning" by Frank Soboczenski, King's College, London, and "Creating a High Altitude Balloon Program," by Jim Kang, maruSpaceTech. In conjunction with this event, a separate sold-out dinner meeting was held at the Cape Canaveral Space Force Station's Sands Space History Center. This event featured Northrop Grumman Corporation's Jonathan W.



Arenberg, Chief Engineer for NASA's James Webb Space Telescope. It is noted that personnel from other sections also contributed to the organization of the event.

- **Orange County, 20th Annual SoCal Aerospace Systems and Technology (ASAT) Conference.** The objective of the AIAA Southern California Aerospace Systems and Technology (SoCal ASAT) Conference is to bring together seasoned and new engineers, researchers, leaders, managers, academia and students, and provide a forum to exchange new ideas, review achievements, and chart a new course for aerospace in the local area. The AIAA Orange County (OC) Section highlighted their activities during the past year and honored a few section members in a year-in-review presentation during the included luncheon. Members and nonmembers attended and a pitch was made for nonmembers to join AIAA during the OC Section presentation, as well as an appeal to members for participation on the council and/or section activities. This year's conference was co-sponsored by the San Gabriel Valley Section, the UCI Student Chapter, and Caltech. With attendance of 114 and 21 presentations in 6 sessions, along with a morning and afternoon keynote, it was hugely successful. Attendance ranged from high school (2 high school students made excellent presentations) and university students to retired professionals and everything in-between.

## **VERY LARGE:**

- **Rocky Mountain, 11th Annual AIAA Rocky Mountain Section Annual Technical Symposium (ATS).** On 21–22 September 2023, the AIAA Rocky Mountain Section Annual Technical Symposium was held at Colorado State University (CSU). Thanks to the tremendous amount of resources provided by CSU, this was our biggest ATS with 530

participants. There were three keynotes, 14 panel discussions, 80+ speakers, and a student poster session, followed by an evening reception and silent auction to support the AIAA CSU Student Branch. Lt. Gen. John E. Shaw, Deputy Commander, U.S. Space Command, was our lunch keynote speaker, and Lockheed Martin's Director of Technology Acceleration, Colonel Bob Behnken, former NASA astronaut and one of the first SpaceX Crewed Dragon astronauts, was also a keynote. Our over 25 sponsors hosted students at a Meet the Employers event to learn about internships, full-time employment opportunities, organizational culture, fascinating company projects, and anything else you want to know. An award ceremony was also held.

- **Los Angeles, AIAA LA-LV University Student Branches Mini-Conference 2024.** On 23 February, the AIAA LA-LV University Student Branches Mini-Conference 2024 was held. AIAA university/student branches are important and integral parts of AIAA and the local professional sections. They are vibrant with aerospace activities and their pursuit of aerospace careers, knowledge, and skills. This conference included exciting activities and projects with the AIAA LA-LV universities/student branches, as well as other professionals to help, inspire, guide them, and network together. Students were able to learn more about their student branches and other students involved in aerospace. There was also a Q&A session with a panel of professionals to discuss local aerospace industries and school-life balance, work-life balance, transition to professional life, networking, finding a job, extracurriculars, summer experiences. Students also were encouraged to present papers or posters at this mini-conference.
- **Greater Huntsville, Rocket City QuizBowl.** This year 24 teams consisting of 108 students competed for trophies and 1st, 2nd, 3rd, and 4th place cash prizes of \$1000, \$750, \$500, and \$250 at the Rocket

City QuizBowl. Teams typically use the funds for travel and registration fees for national tournaments in Chicago and Atlanta, or to defray the cost of study materials. The event was hosted jointly by the AIAA Greater Huntsville Section (GHS) and the AIAA University of Alabama in Huntsville Student Branch. Tournament volunteers included members of AIAA GHS and the AIAA UAH Student Branch, as well as volunteers from local institutions and schools. In addition to bringing the students together with members of the Huntsville aerospace community, the tournament provided an opportunity to remind those planning to major in STEM fields related to aeronautics or astronautics to apply for AIAA GHS's Robert L. Sackheim Engineering, Science, & Math Scholarship and also take advantage of AIAA's free high school student membership.

- **New England, AIAA New England Honors & Awards Night.** The AIAA New England Section organized an Honors & Awards ceremony in May 2024 to recognize our AIAA members' achievements and service to the aeronautics, astronautics, and aerospace industry. Held on 24 May, the Honors and Awards program recognized outstanding recipients in several categories, followed by dinner and a networking reception. In addition to recognizing distinguished AIAA members and their service, the event also provided young professionals and students with an opportunity to build professional knowledge related to fields, organizations, and roles and mingle with members of the professional community with the hope of attracting new members. The speakers included Mark Maybury, Lockheed Martin, and Steve Smith, Principal Director, Engineering, Draper.

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## About AIAA

The American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics (AIAA) is the world's largest aerospace technical society. With nearly 30,000 individual members from 91 countries, and 100 corporate members, AIAA brings together industry, academia, and government to advance engineering and science in aviation, space, and defense. For more information, visit [www.aiaa.org](http://www.aiaa.org), or follow AIAA on [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#), [LinkedIn](#), and [Instagram](#).