

GREATER HUNTSVILLE AIAA SECTION 2018 ANNUAL AWARDS DINNER

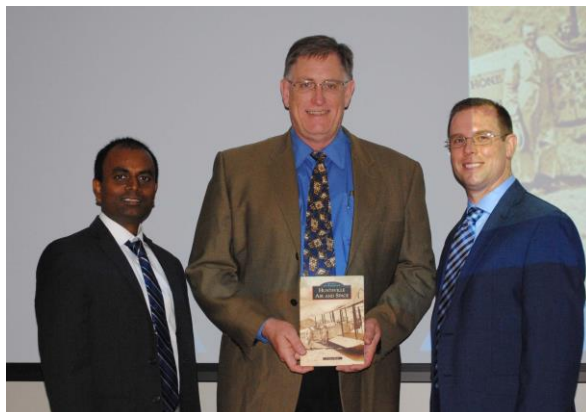
Article and photos by Dr. Arloe Mayne

The Greater Huntsville AIAA Section held its 66th Annual Awards Dinner on May 18, 2018 at the Jackson Center in Huntsville, Alabama. The event was conducted by the Section's 2017-2018 Vice-Chairman MAJ Alex Jehle.



Bob Jones AFJROTC Color Guard

The invited speaker for the evening was AIAA Executive Director Mr. Daniel Dumbacher. After a brief presentation of his personal background, he discussed the role of the AIAA, future policy issues, the aviation outlook, the Earth-Moon-Mars accomplishments and future, and other things before taking questions from the audience. Prior to joining the AIAA staff, Mr. Dumbacher was most recently a Professor at Purdue University and a Deputy Associate Administrator at NASA Headquarters. Among numerous awards, he has received the Silver Snoopy Award and the NASA Distinguished Service Medal. He earned his bachelor's degree in mechanical engineering from Purdue University and a master's degree in business administration from the University of Alabama in Huntsville.



Chairman Dr. Vetcha and Incoming Chairman MAJ Jehle presenting speaker Mr. Dumbacher (center) with Huntsville Air and Space book

After MAJ Jehle's welcome, the flags of the United States and the State of Alabama were posted by the Bob Jones High School AFJROTC, followed by the playing of the National Anthem. An invocation by Mrs. Lisa Philippart and a toast by MAJ Jehle preceded the evening's dinner.



Speaker, AIAA Executive Director Mr. Daniel Dumbacher

Following Mr. Dumbacher's talk, Dr. Vetcha began the awards program with the recognition of 8th grader Mr. Riley Jordan, 10th grader Mr. Jeremiah Davis, and 11th grader Miss Mary Alice Jouve, the recipients of awards by the Section at the Alabama Science and Engineering Fair. Mr. Jordan was the recipient of a similar award last year as a 7th grader. 5th grader Mr. Jack Gregory Revera, and 10th grader Mr. Jeremiah Davis (yes, you just heard that name) were then recognized for receiving awards by the Section at the North Alabama Regional Science and Engineering Fair.



Dr. Vetcha with Miss Taylor Honeycutt

Each year the Space Systems Technical Committee sponsors essay contests for 7th and for 8th grade students. The subject of this year's contest was the role of astronauts and their impact on NASA, their impact on the future of the United States, and their impact on international partnerships. 8th grader Miss Taylor Honeycutt was the winner from the Section's area, and was presented a certificate from the Section. Last year, Miss Honeycutt was the national 7th grade essay contest winner.

Mr. Jared Jones of Huntsville was awarded this year's \$1,000 Greater Huntsville Section Robert L. Sackheim Engineering & Science Scholarship. He plans to major in electrical engineering at Auburn University. Forty-two scholarships totaling \$44,000 have been awarded by the Section since 2002.



Chairman Vetcha presenting scholarship certificate to Mr. Jarod Jones

Each year an Awards Committee determines the recipients for the Section's awards which are presented at the annual dinner. This year's awards were presented by Chairman Dr. Naveen Vetcha and Honors and Awards Director Dr. Joseph Majdalani.



Chairman Vetcha presenting Exceptional Service Award to Ms. Brittani Searcy

Since the inception of the NASA Human Exploration Rover Challenge twenty some years ago, the Section has been involved with that activity. For her role in leading the Section's participation in the 2018 Rover Challenge, Chairman Vetcha presented the Liaison to Student Branches director Ms. Brittani Searcy with the Section's Exceptional Service Award.

The recipient of the Undergraduate Student of the Year Award for 2018 was Mr. Nathaniel A. Long. He earned a Bachelor of Science in Aerospace Engineering with a minor in German from the University of Alabama in Huntsville.



Chairman Vetcha and Dr. Majdalani with Undergraduate Student of the Year Mr. Nathaniel Long



Chairman Vetcha and Dr. Majdalani with Graduate Student of the Year Mr. Paul Kovacic

The recipient of the Graduate Student of the Year Award for 2018 was Mr. Paul A. Kovacic, a doctoral student in the Department of Aerospace Engineering at Auburn University. Mr. Kovacic is a member of the Auburn AIAA student branch, where he served as both treasurer and president.

The recipient of the Ed Pruett Young Professional of the Year Award was Mr. Brandon Stiltner. Mr. Pruett was on the Section Council and served the Section for many years. Mr. Stiltner received BS and MS degrees in Aerospace Engineering from the Virginia Polytechnic Institute. He is currently employed at Jacobs Technology, and has been active in the Greater Huntsville AIAA Section, serving, among other things, as the Section's 2016-2017 Chairman.



*Mr. Brandon Stiltner, recipient of the Young Professional of the Year Award
(Brandon was unable to attend the Awards Dinner)*



Dr. Kurt Polzin was the recipient of the Earl Pearce Professional of the Year Award. This award is named for Mr. Earl Pearce who was on the Section Council and served as Supernumerary for many years. Dr. Polzin received a BS degree in Aeronautical and Astronautical Engineering from the Ohio State University and a PhD degree from Princeton University. He is employed by NASA, and is an AIAA Associate Fellow. He has served the Section and the AIAA in a variety of positions, including being Section Chairman and Region II Director.

Chairman Vetcha and Dr. Majdalani with Professional of the Year recipient Dr. Kurt Polzin

The Konrad Dannenberg Educator of the Year Award recipient was Dr. D. Brian Landrum. The award is named for Mr. Konrad Dannenberg, a German-American rocket pioneer who was an avid proponent of education, an active member of the AIAA and an inspiration to the aerospace community. Dr.

Landrum's selection as the Award's recipient was announced by Mr. Dannenberg's widow, Mrs. Jacquelyn Dannenberg. Dr. Landrum is an AIAA Associate Fellow who received BS and MS degrees in Aerospace Engineering from Texas A&M University, and a PHD degree from North Carolina State University. He is currently on the faculty at the University of Alabama in Huntsville.



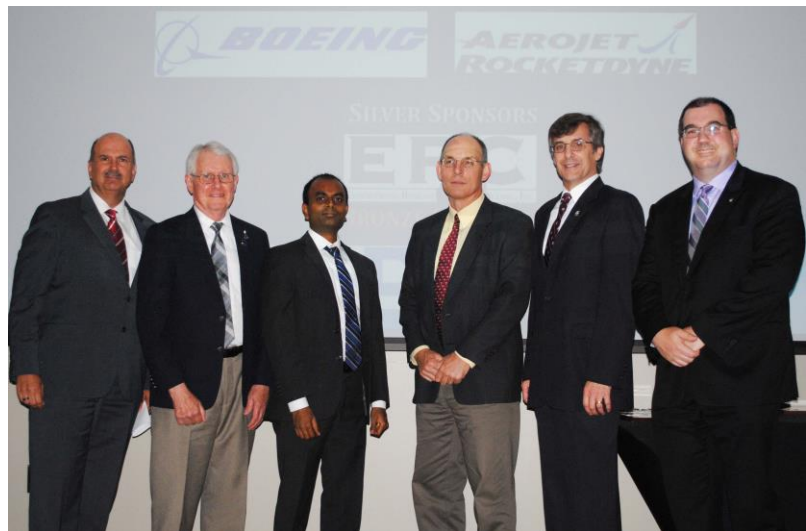
Chairman Vetcha, Mrs. Dannenberg, Educator of the Year Award recipient Dr. Landrum, and Dr. Majdalani



Chairman Vetcha receiving Schilling Award from Dr. Majdalani

The Martin Schilling Award is presented to a Section member in recognition of outstanding service to the Section, such as major contributions to its growth, technical programs, or administrative functions. The award is named for the Section's founding president, Dr. Martin Schilling. The 2018 recipient of the Schilling Award was Dr. Naveen Vetcha. Dr. Vetcha received MS and PhD degrees in Mechanical Engineering from the University of California Los Angeles, a MTech degree in Mechanical Engineering from the Indian Institute of Technology Kanpur, and a BE degree in Mechanical Engineering from Osmania University, India. He is a Senior Member of the AIAA, and has been very active in the Section, including serving as the 2017-2018 Chairman.

Following a tradition begun last year, Dr. Vetcha was also recognized for his service as the 2017-2018 Chairman by all of the previous Section Chairmen in attendance.



Chairman Vetcha and previous Chairmen
Mr. Ken Philippart, 2014-2015; Dr. Arloe Mayne, 2002-2003; Dr. Vetcha;
Mr. Todd Honeycutt, 1999-2000; Mr. Alan Lowrey, 1995-1996 and 2001-2002;
Dr. Kurt Polzin, 2015-2016



Chairman Vetcha, Mr. Trent with Toftoy Award, and Dr. Majdalani

The Holger Toftoy Award is presented to a Section member in recognition of outstanding technical management in the fields of aeronautics and astronautics. The 2018 recipient of the Toftoy Award was Mr. David Trent. He received a BS degree in Mechanical Engineering and a Masters Degree in Business Administration from the California State University of Fullerton. He is the Site Director for the Airbus Engineering Center in Mobile, Alabama, and is a Senior Member of the AIAA.

As a further part of the recognition of the outgoing Chairman, the evening's speaker, AIAA Executive Director Mr. Dumbacher, presented Dr. Vetcha with a Certificate of Appreciation for leading the Section this past year.



Mr. Dumbacher and Dr. Vetcha



Chairman Vetcha, Dr. Hartfield with Oberth Award, and Dr. Majdalani

The Hermann Oberth Award is presented to a Section member in recognition of outstanding individual scientific achievement in the field of astronautics or for the promotion and advancement of the aeronautical sciences. This year's recipient of the Oberth Award was Dr. Roy J. Hartfield. Dr. Hartfield holds a PhD in Mechanical and Aerospace Engineering from the University of Virginia. He is the Walt and Virginia Woltosz Professor of Aerospace Engineering in the Samuel Ginn College of Engineering at Auburn University, and is an Associate Fellow of the AIAA.



Chairman Vetcha, Mr. Philippart with Air Force Eagle statue, Ms. Statham, and Ms. Searcy

For several years past Section Chairman LTC (ret.) Ken Philippart has been very active in supporting the growth and development of Section Council members. For his mentoring of themselves and other Section Council members, Dr. Naveen, Ms. Brittani Searcy, and Ms. Tamara Statham presented Ken a special Air Force eagle statue award.

Following the Awards portion of the program, 2017-2018 Chairman Dr. Vetcha recognized the past year's Council members and provided a summary of the Section's activities for the past year.

The Section's Officers and Directors for 2017-2018 were then recognized and incoming Chairman Maj. Alex Jehle provided remarks on his vision for the upcoming year. The dinner was adjourned by Dr. Vetcha after the retrieval of the colors by the Bob Jones High School AFJROTC.



2018-2019 Chairman MAJ Jehle receiving Chairman's Plaque from 2017-2018 Chairman Dr. Vetcha



2018-2019 Section Officers and Directors

*2017-2018 Chairman Dr. Naveen Vetcha; Honors and Awards Director Dr. Joe Majdalani;
Young Professionals Director Mr. Nishanth Goli; Public Policy Director Mr. Chris Crumbly;
Webmaster Dr. Arloe Mayne; 2018-2019 Chairman MAJ Alex Jehle;
Liaison to Student Branches Director Ms. Brittani Searcy; Communication Director Ms. Caroline Lang;
Membership Director Ms. Theresa Jehle; Treasurer Ms. Kathryn Crowe; Secretary Ms. Julie Mason;
Vice-Chairman LTC Charles (Greg) Simpson; STEM K-12 Director Dr. Jim Parsons*

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