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AIAA PRESIDENT DAVE THOMPSON TO LEAD WEBINAR ON AEROSPACE INNOVATION
Event Kicks Off AIAA's Role as Aerospace Advisor to Conrad Foundation Awards Program

October 15, 2009 – Reston, Va. – The American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics (AIAA) has been named by the Conrad Foundation as the official Aerospace Advisor for the newly created Aerospace Exploration category of the Pete Conrad Spirit of Innovation Awards program for high school students. The awards program encourages students to address the grand challenges of the 21st century using science, technology, innovation, and entrepreneurship, in the fields of aerospace exploration, green schools, renewable energy, and space nutrition.

To kick off this exciting collaboration, AIAA president Dave Thompson, CEO of Orbital Sciences Corporation, will lead a Conrad Foundation “webinar” on October 19 at 3:00 p.m. PDT (6:00 p.m. EDT). Taking place on “The Exchange” – a special part of the Foundation’s Web site where students, teachers, and professionals can exchange ideas – the webinar will focus on what role innovation plays in the aerospace industry. Free and open to the public, the webinar can be accessed at www.conradawards.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=175&Itemid=269.

Mr. Thompson will discuss the history, mission, and significance of AIAA; the significance of the aerospace industry to America’s economic health and national security; and some of the ways that the industry is working on solutions to global issues such as climate change and our dependence on fossil fuels.

Joshua Neubert, executive director of the Conrad Foundation, stated: “This is a fantastic opportunity for any Spirit of Innovation Awards participant to gain special insight into the aerospace industry, and get a hint as to what solutions companies are looking for right now! It is also a great opportunity to learn about, and become part of, an organization that is on the forefront of aerospace technology and commerce.”

As a part of its involvement with the Spirit of Innovation Awards, AIAA will give the winning teams in the aerospace exploration and space nutrition categories AIAA student memberships, and the winning teachers will receive Educator Associate memberships in AIAA, qualifying them for classroom grants as well as participation in AIAA programs. The winning teams will also be invited to participate in the “Education Alley” event at the AIAA SPACE 2010 Conference and Exhibit in September 2010 in Anaheim, Calif.

For more information on Mr. Thompson’s appearance on “The Exchange,” please contact Lisa Bacon at 703.264.7527 or lisab@aiaa.org.

AIAA is the world’s largest technical society dedicated to the global aerospace profession. With more than 35,000 individual members worldwide, and 90 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.

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