
Airbus Group And The Global Engineering Deans Council (GEDC) Announce Finalists for 3rd Annual Diversity Award

Toulouse, 20 October 2015 – Airbus Group and partner, the Global Engineering Deans Council (GEDC), have named three finalists for the 2015 Award for Diversity in Engineering Education at the IE Reinventing Higher Education conference in Madrid. The award was launched three years ago to promote a more diverse engineering workforce globally.

The award recognises the grassroots initiatives and the people behind them which enable students from all backgrounds and profiles to study and succeed in the field of engineering – both while as students and when they join the workforce. Out of a total of 29 candidates in 13 countries, three finalists stood out:

Renetta Tull from the University of Maryland, Baltimore County, in the U.S; Fadi Aloul from the American University of Sharjah, United Arab Emirates; and Martin Baumann from RWTH Aachen University in Aachen, Germany.

The three finalists have been recognised for their ability to channel their passion for engineering into real, measurable change through initiatives that have the potential to be replicated elsewhere. On 30 November 2015, they'll have the opportunity to present their ideas to a jury led by Charles Champion, Airbus' Executive Vice President Engineering at the annual GEDC conference in Adelaide, Australia.

“Our priority is to have the best possible talent at every level of the company, and we know that diversity drives innovation because it brings varied perspectives on problem solving,” said Jacqui Chan, Head of Diversity and Inclusion for Airbus Group and its Airbus Division. “If we don't recruit and retain people from different and varied backgrounds and profiles, then we risk missing out on the talent and ideas that can really add value to our business.”

Recognising the key role that engineers will play in creating the sustainable solutions to critical issues facing society in the future, Airbus Group and the GEDC are united in their belief that both industry and academia need to actively encourage more students to choose engineering as both a course of study and, ultimately, as a career path.

“We are at a crossroads now – with significant 21st century challenges ranging from cybercrime to delivering safe water supplies, we urgently need to encourage more young people to become engineers,” said John Beynon, Chair of the GEDC and Dean of Engineering at the University of Adelaide. “Our three finalists have taken up this challenge. Their passion and determination is to open up an exciting future in engineering to young people from every walk of life. Longer term, this will provide businesses calling out for problem solvers with a better, more varied pipeline of ‘thinkers’ to choose from.”

The award recipient will be selected based on the demonstrable success of his or her initiative, the transferability of his or her idea and the potential to inspire other diversity initiatives. Along with the global visibility the award offers, the recipient will receive a significant financial contribution to support their work.

Alongside the three finalists for 2015, award organisers honoured Gary May from the Georgia Institute of Technology in the U.S. State of Georgia with an exceptional Jury's Recognition for Outstanding Achievement. The award acknowledges his career-long efforts and achievements in increasing diversity in engineering.

NOTES TO EDITORS

The three finalists are:

Renetta Tull, Associate Vice Provost for Graduate Student Development & Postdoctoral Affairs, University of Maryland, Baltimore County, U.S.

Renetta Tull leads the Promise Alliance for Graduate Education and the Professoriate to train undergraduate and graduate students, postdoctoral fellows and early-career faculty. This programme includes a global STEM diversity and inclusion initiative, and aims to build global engineering workforce capacity through focused attention on increasing the numbers of future engineering faculty from underrepresented groups and has resulted in a significantly increased pipeline of diverse alumni and engineering programme participants.

Fadi Aloul, Professor of Computer Science & Engineering, Director of the HP Institute, American University of Sharjah, United Arab Emirates

Professor Aloul has been selected for his key role in developing a common first-year undergraduate engineering course. The programme introduces students to the engineering profession, and stimulates their critical thinking, creativity and innovation. To date, over 10,000 students from 92 nationalities have taken part, with an average of 35% female student participation.

Martin Baumann, Assistant Professor, RWTH Aachen University, Aachen, Germany

Professor Baumann has been selected for his work on enabling students with disabilities and diverse learners to be assessed on an equal basis with all students. He has developed a range of tools to assist students and support teachers, and also works directly with students concerned to create the interfaces and devices required to meet their needs. More than 30,000 students have been able to take adapted e-assessments since 2004.

More information on www.diversityinengineering.com

About Airbus Group

Airbus Group is a global leader in aeronautics, space and related services. In 2014, the Group – comprising Airbus, Airbus Defence and Space and Airbus Helicopters – generated revenues of € 60.7 billion and employed a workforce of around 138,600.

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