

Sikorsky Innovations STEM Challenge Takes Flight

STRATFORD, Connecticut -

Sikorsky Innovations, the technology development organization of Sikorsky Aircraft Corp., has launched a Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) challenge for Connecticut high schools to offer local students an opportunity to apply their creative, innovative thinking and classroom learning to technical problems faced in an actual engineering workplace. Sikorsky Aircraft is a subsidiary of United Technologies Corp. (NYSE: UTX).

Student teams will compete to solve a design challenge related to restoration of the official State Aircraft of Connecticut, the F4U-4 Corsair. A lack of technical data on the aircraft's fuselage, wings, and landing gear, is preventing replacement of damaged or corroded components. After conducting a study of the original drawings and specifications, the teams will be assigned a challenge problem related to a component/assembly requiring restoration. Using state-of-the-art design and analysis tools, the teams will create a modern technical data package that will enable fabrication and assembly using current manufacturing techniques. The winning solution will be provided to Connecticut companies for manufacture and integration into the aircraft.

The competition is co-sponsored by Sikorsky Innovations, Connecticut Corsair, a volunteer organization dedicated to the promotion of education and Connecticut businesses, and Connecticut Innovations, an organization that provides strategic capital and operational insight to emerging high technology companies.

"The high school STEM Challenge will allow students in Connecticut to test their wings – literally!" said Chris VanBuiten, Director of Sikorsky Innovations. "As a world class leader in global flight solutions, Sikorsky is proud to support education and workforce development in Connecticut, along with Connecticut Corsair and Connecticut Innovations. This is a great opportunity to promote STEM education, reinforce the commitment to innovative thinking, and encourage students to pursue engineering careers in Connecticut."

"In addition to providing an exciting venue for creative engineering applications, we anticipate that the program will foster effective long term relationships, give mentoring opportunities to our staff, provide STEM education and eventual internships to the students, and help to build and retain a strong and innovative engineering workforce in our state," VanBuiten added.

The project kicked off on in early August with a formal presentation of the program outline to the schools who are participating in the challenge. It will continue throughout the school year. The challenge culminates with presentations by the competing schools to a panel of judges from industry and academia. The winning school will be named in May 2012.

Sikorsky Aircraft Corp., based in Stratford, Conn., is a world leader in helicopter design, manufacture, and service. United Technologies Corp., based in Hartford, Conn., provides a broad range of high technology products and support services to the aerospace and building systems industries.

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