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LEGENDARY DESIGNERS, FLIGHT INSTRUCTOR, ASTRONAUT NAMED JUDGES FOR EAA FOUNDER'S INNOVATION PRIZE

SpaceShipOne creator Burt Rutan chief judge for 'Shark Tank'-type competition

EAA AVIATION CENTER, OSHKOSH, Wisconsin — (September 10, 2015) — Luminaries from throughout the aviation world will be the judges as the Experimental Aircraft Association invites innovators to enhance aviation safety for amateur-built aircraft through its [Founder's Innovation Prize](#) competition. The competition, first announced at EAA AirVenture Oshkosh 2015, will begin accepting entries on October 1, 2015.

The competition will use the best ideas from EAA members and chapters, with the encouragement of cash prizes for the best emerging technology. The annual prize will have a specific safety focus each year, with the upcoming year's goal emphasizing the design and development of a low-cost solution that recognizes imminent loss of control (LOC) in aircraft and provides an innovative way of increasing situational awareness or automation to the pilot.

[Burt Rutan](#), legendary designer of SpaceShipOne – which in 2004 became the world's first successful civilian spacecraft – as well as creator of dozens of other aircraft, has agreed to serve as chief judge for the five-member group.

Other judges on the panel will include:

[Dick VanGrunsven](#) – Designer of the Van's RV series of aircraft kits, which are the world's most popular kit design with more than 9,000 completed aircraft now flying worldwide.

[Charlie Precourt](#) – Former NASA astronaut who flew on four Space Shuttle missions, including twice as shuttle commander. He is currently General Manager of Orbital ATK's Propulsion Systems Division and also chairs EAA's safety committee.

[Rod Machado](#) – Best recognized as a renowned aviation safety speaker, he also has more than 10,000 hours of flight instruction time and is recognized as the voice of Microsoft's Flight Simulator software.

[Dave Morss](#) – One of the country's preeminent civilian test pilots and air racers, Dave has tested hundreds of aircraft designs and also appeared on the TV series "Mythbusters" as an expert on aircraft design and safety.

The competition's judging criteria and timeline is also innovative. Entrants will focus on cost, ease of installation, simplicity, wide applicability, and effectiveness in reducing loss-of-control occurrences. [Entries will be accepted](#) beginning October 1, 2015. The top five entries will be invited to a presentation at EAA AirVenture 2016, where judges will review and critique the five innovations in a live, "Shark Tank"-style program. The best concept will receive a \$25,000 cash prize, with second place receiving \$10,000 and third \$5,000.

About EAA

EAA embodies the spirit of aviation through the world's most engaged community of aviation enthusiasts. EAA's 190,000 members and 1,000 local chapters enjoy the fun and camaraderie of sharing their passion for flying, building and restoring recreational aircraft. For more information on EAA and its programs, call 800-JOIN-EAA (800-564-6322) or go to www.eaa.org. For continual news updates, connect with www.twitter.com/EAA.