Boeing Engineer Among Winners of the Black Engineer of the Year Award

A Boeing engineer who has helped develop sophisticated electric actuators for advanced unmanned air systems, space vehicles and commercial airplanes is among the winners of the national 2006 Black Engineer of the Year Award.

David Blanding, a senior engineer with Boeing Phantom Works, the company's advanced research and development unit, is a recognized authority in electrically powered and fluid subsystems. He is also a mentor to students from diverse backgrounds. His personal motto: "Helping young people to go *beyond* where I am is more important than helping them get to *where* I am."

Blanding and other winners of the award are being honored for outstanding contributions to technology and for serving as exceptional role models. He was presented with his award during the 20th Annual Black Engineer of the Year Awards (BEYA) conference held Feb. 16-19 in Baltimore, Md.

"Dave Blanding has clearly demonstrated his personal commitment not only to achieving technical excellence in his own field but also to inspiring others to pursue technical careers and excellence in those careers," said Jim Morris, vice president of Boeing Commercial Airplanes Engineering and Manufacturing and executive sponsor of The Boeing Company's Technical Excellence Initiative. "So Dave truly represents what this award is designed to recognize."

Blanding, currently based in Huntington Beach, Calif., joined Boeing in 1971 as a lab test engineer on the B-1 program. He progressed through increasingly responsible positions, working on such programs as the Space Shuttle vehicle, the AH-64 Apache attack helicopter, the B1-B Lancer, the National Aerospace Plane, AC-130U gunship and the Space Launch Initiative. The electric actuators he helped develop will be used on the X-45 Joint Unmanned Combat Air System, the X-37 space technology demonstrator, and the 787 Dreamliner.

Electric actuators are mechanisms in airplanes, rotorcraft, spacecraft and other vehicles that control primary and secondary flight controls and vehicle utility systems. These devices will replace the traditional hydraulically powered actuators that are being used today to provide the same function.

Blanding has been the board president of his Los Angeles Baptist church school for more than 20 years and spends much of his spare time coaching and teaching students. He is also active in Boeing educational programs for minority students.

Blanding is a member of several prestigious engineering organizations, including the International Council of Aeronautical Sciences.

Since 1987, the BEYA conference, produced by Career Communications Group, has recognized the outstanding achievements of black engineers. Every year, a panel of educators, engineers and managers around the United States reviews more than 250 nominations. The three-day awards conference also links qualified engineers, scientists, business professionals and students with regional and national employers.

Also during the conference, three Boeing executives received recognition by the editors of *US Black Engineer & Information Technology* magazine as being among the Top 100 Most Important Blacks in Technology in 2006. They are James Bell, Boeing Chief Financial Officer; Norma Clayton, vice president of Boeing's Global Sourcing Initiative; and James Wigfall, vice president of Supplier Management at the company's Shared Services Group. The accomplishments of the 2006 honorees "validate the important contributions Blacks make in the high-tech and business world on a daily basis," says the USBE.

The Boeing Company is the world's leading aerospace company with a heritage that mirrors the history of flight. It is the largest manufacturer of satellites, commercial jetliners, and military aircraft. The company is also a global market leader in missile defense, human space flight, and launch services. Chicago-based Boeing has an extensive global reach with customers in 145 countries.
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