


Army announces student teams for inaugural HBCU/MI Design Competition

 apgnews.com/inside-the-innovation/army-announces-student-teams-for-inaugural-hbcu-mi-design-competition

U.S. Army Combat Capabilities Development Command

March 26, 2019

By Amanda Ligon, CCDC

ABERDEEN PROVING GROUND, Md. — The U.S. Army has announced the top 11 student teams set to compete at its inaugural HBCU/MI Design Competition next month.

The competition, led by the U.S. Army Combat Capabilities Development Command, challenges undergraduate students from historically black colleges and universities and other minority serving institutions (HBCUs/MIs) to develop solutions to real-world technical challenges faced by U.S. Army researchers.

HBCU/MI Design Competition team finalists will represent the following colleges and universities:

- * University of Maryland-Eastern Shore
- * Tuskegee University
- * University of Texas at San Antonio
- * University of Texas at El Paso
- * University of Illinois — Chicago
- * North Carolina A&T State University
- * University of Puerto Rico — Mayaguez
- * Spelman College
- * University of Texas at Arlington
- * Grambling State University
- * Inter American University of Puerto Rico

The inaugural year of the competition focuses on unmanned aerial vehicle technology gaps in two topic areas. The first topic challenges students to eliminate wire bundles in an innovative way in small UAVs. The second topic seeks a way to replace UAV parts with biologically-based materials.

Based on these problem statements, students will develop concepts and build a UAV prototype to demonstrate at the competition's national event, to be held at the University of Texas at El Paso, April 23-24.

"We are proud to host the inaugural HBCU/MI Design Competition and garner insight from our nation's future innovators," said Maj. Gen. Cedric T. Wins, CCDC commander.

The competition is one component of the command's larger commitment to partnering with HBCUs and MSIs.

“The success of future Army science and technology depends on the next generation of diverse, highly competent STEM professionals,” Wins said. “It starts with inspiring students to tackle complex challenges through competitions like this. We look forward to watching the student-designed unmanned aerial vehicles take flight in the UTEP stadium in April.”

Last year, CCDC sent out a call for proposals to universities across the country. Those proposals were evaluated by CCDC and Army Research Laboratory subject matter experts and narrowed down to the 11 team finalists. Each team received a grant to build its prototype and travel to El Paso for the final event.

During the final competition, teams will present their solution and demonstrate their prototype by flying it in the UTEP Sun Bowl Stadium.

A judging panel comprised of CCDC senior leader and SMEs will evaluate each team’s concept and prototype based on four criteria:

- (1) Their ability to describe their solution and the details of their design,
- (2) The clarity of their description and how it addresses one of the proposed Army challenges,
- (3) The success of their demonstration, and
- (4) Their plan for how it could be commercialized for Army use.

The HBCU/MI Design Competition national event will include a Technology Expo hosted by the U.S. Army and the University of Texas at El Paso, open to local K-12 and college students. Attendees will also be able to watch the UAV competition in the UTEP stadium.

To follow the HBCU/MI Design Competition, like the CCDC Facebook page at: www.facebook.com/usarmyccdc.

The U.S. Army Combat Capabilities Development Command (CCDC), formerly known as the U.S. Army Research, Development and Engineering Command (RDECOM), has the mission to lead in the discovery, development and delivery of the technology-based capabilities required to make Soldiers more lethal to win our Nation’s wars and come home safely. The command collaborates across the Future Force Modernization Enterprise and its own global network of domestic and international partners in academia, industry and other government agencies to accomplish this mission. CCDC is a major subordinate command of the U.S. Army Futures Command.