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Hampton Roads Tech Expo yields big insights, challenges and awards in Southeastern Virginia

*Building the regional economy through collaboration focused on innovation,
technology jobs, and intellectual property*

The Hampton Roads Innovation Collaborative (HRIC) gathered over 200 regional tech leaders together on Wednesday September 5, 2018, for a daylong expo to further technology-based economic development in the Commonwealth of Virginia. The event was held at Old Dominion University's (ODU) Virginia Modeling, Analysis, and Simulation Center (VMASC) in Suffolk.

From a welcome kick-off by ODU president John Broderick, remarks from senior Virginia Senator Mark Warner and subject matter expert panels, the event served to celebrate and inspire innovation in the Hampton Roads region.

Hot topics and future trends discussed in sessions included enabling digital transformation using artificial intelligence (AI), cybersecurity and biometric signature identification, intellectual property protections and patents, and next generation networking and infrastructure.

"The Tech Expo hosted by HRIC was a great mix of topics and discussion around emerging technology, innovation and entrepreneurship. As a member of the Entrepreneurs' Organization for our area, I was happy to share personal thoughts and observations on running a technology company in today's regional business environment," said Brad Scott, president and CEO of Cetan Corp, a certified Native American, veteran-owned small business IT solutions company who also serves at HRIC's chairman.

CIO panel of IT leaders included Daniel Jones, city of Portsmouth; Deborah Cassidy, PRA Group; Joe McMahon, Naval Safety Center; Amber Boehnlein, Jefferson Lab; moderated by Chuck Williams, city of Chesapeake.

Emerging Technology panel featured Daniel McPeters, Applings Studio on augmented reality; Kevin Esser, G2 Ops, on cyber security; and Barry Ezell, VMASC, on modeling and simulation; moderated by Patrick Ryan of Huntington Ingalls.

Entrepreneurs Organization panel featured Cetan Corp.'s Scott, Array Digital's Erik Olson, On Call Telecom's Glenn Davis, moderated by Patti Hamilton of Hamilton Consulting Solutions Corp.



Larry "Chip" Filer, associate vice president for ODU's Institute for Innovation and Entrepreneurship [<https://www.odu.edu/univ-impact/entrepreneurship>], discussed ODU's role in the regional technology ecosystem, commenting: "I encourage each one of you to use ODU, your regional research university, to the fullest; it's your resource for not only higher education and career development. We are growing entrepreneurs who will create jobs and strengthen Virginia's economy. From the Strome Entrepreneurial Center where students, faculty and

staff collaborate to launch new businesses to the Center for Enterprise Innovation where nationally – and internationally – known experts' mentor new business leaders, veterans and up-and-coming entrepreneurs to grow their enterprises".

During the evening's Tech Night Awards Banquet, several technology firms were recognized for their unique products and entrepreneurial efforts.

1. Emerging Unmanned System Product of the Year - Advanced Aircraft [<https://www.advancedaircraftcompany.com>]
2. Emerging Cyber Product of the Year - Jigsaw Security Enterprise Inc. [<https://www.jigsawsecurityenterprise.com>]
3. Emerging Augmented Reality Product of the Year – Ario [<https://www.ario.com>]
4. Emerging Bio Med Product of the Year - PolyPhysics, Inc.
5. Innovation Enterprise Product of the Year – xTuple's xTupleCommerce [<https://xtuple.com>]
6. Innovation Training Product of the Year - Mymic LLC [<http://www.mymic.net>]
7. Top Small-Medium Technology Job Creator - G2 OPS Inc. [<https://g2-ops.com>]
8. Technology Start-up of the Year - Applings Studio, LLC [<https://applingsstudio.com>]
9. Technology Entrepreneur of the Year - Pratik Kothari of TechArk [<https://gotechark.com>]
10. Technology Small-Medium Sized Enterprise of the Year – DroneUp [<https://www.droneup.com>]



Dan Bell, president of HRIC closed the day's events with a "call to action and next steps", stating "The Tech Expo with Tech Night Awards are an opportunity for like-minded people from technology business and innovation to gather, learn, share and celebrate. The Tech Expo is an important part of what we're trying to achieve in Hampton Roads, which is to develop a strong, new economic pillar of small-to-medium sized technology business."

About Hampton Roads Innovation Collaborative (HRIC)

HRIC is one of 10 regional members of Virginia's Center for Innovative Technology (CIT) Tech Council Network [<https://www.cit.org>], originally formed in 1996 to help advance economic development through technology business initiatives and education with political, civic and business leaders. HRIC is a collaborative model, instrumental in the development of a common fabric for technology innovation and entrepreneurship in Virginia's Hampton Roads region.

Tags: #HRTechExpo

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