



For Immediate Release

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EDPA seeking nominations statewide for Alabama Launchpad Innovation Awards; winners to be recognized at 5th Annual Alabama Innovation and Entrepreneurship Conference in Birmingham

Birmingham, Ala, March 30 --The Economic Development Partnership of Alabama announces that nominations open today through May 17 for the 2015 Alabama Launchpad Innovation Awards.

The awards celebrate and honor contributions to Alabama's innovation economy. Winners will be honored at the Fifth Annual Alabama Launchpad Innovation and Entrepreneurship Conference Sept. 2 in Birmingham.

"Alabama is an incredibly innovative state," said Greg Sheek, Alabama Launchpad programs director. "The Alabama Launchpad Innovation Awards highlight ideas and innovations from all sectors, sizes and types of companies throughout the state."

Nominations are accepted in the following categories:

- Corporate Innovator of the Year (small)
- Corporate Innovator of the Year (large)
- Outstanding Achievement in Innovative Manufacturing
- Outstanding Public-Private Partnership for Innovation
- Lifetime Achievement in Innovation

Companies should demonstrate significant achievement specifically in the areas of job creation, commitment to innovation and innovation that addresses a local or global need.

Self-nominations are also encouraged.

"It is important that we celebrate those who have identified an opportunity, a gap in the market place, and more importantly, identified a solution that works and executed upon that,"

said Angela Wier, EDPA vice president. “Innovation is the force that creates the jobs of tomorrow. Through the awards, we want to provide a forum to highlight what innovators and entrepreneurs are doing and inspire others to follow in their footsteps.”

This year’s winners will be selected by a review committee comprised of six top Alabama business leaders: Tom Stanton (Chairman), CEO of Huntsville’s ADTRAN Inc.; Art Tipton, president and CEO, Southern Research; Neill Wright, Liberty Bank; Harris Morrissette, president, China Doll/Dixie Lily, Inc.; Yolanda Sullivan, CEO of YWCA Central Alabama; and Billy L. Harbert, president and CEO, BL Harbert International, LLC.

Last year, judges selected winners in eight categories, including the Lifetime Achievement Award winner, Lonnie McMillian, co-founder of the renown HudsonAlpha Institute for Biotechnology and telecommunications giant ADTRAN in Huntsville.

The nomination form and a gallery of past winners are available at

<http://alabamalaunchpad.com/awards/>

About the Economic Development Partnership of Alabama: *In its 25th year, the Partnership represents the private sector’s contribution to economic development in Alabama. EDPA is a private, non-profit organization funded by more than 70 leading companies committed to the state’s long-term economic success. EDPA provides leadership and services that recruit new businesses to the state, retain existing business and renew Alabama’s economy by fostering innovation both within existing industries and through the commercialization of new technologies.*

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