



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **UNITED SPACE ALLIANCE HONORS SUPPLIERS**

HOUSTON, Texas, June 18, 2010 – United Space Alliance recently recognized seven Suppliers that have made significant contributions to America’s space program. The business enterprises are spread across the nation and demonstrate the diversity of contributions required for support of human space flight.

“We at USA recognize that not only does it require a dedicated, talented and skilled workforce to accomplish our NASA mission, but we must also have an equally dedicated network of suppliers,” said Don Herring, USA Director of Supplier and Florida Customer Relations.

Recipients of the 2009 Small Business of the Year Award was Engravers Metal Fabricators (EMF), Inc of Merritt Island, Fla., the Small Disadvantaged Business of the Year was Impact Industrial Supplies, Inc of Tampa, Fla., selected as USA’s Small Woman Owned Business of the Year was A-B Computer Solutions of Mandeville, La.

Recipient of the HUBZone (Historically Underutilized Business Zone) Business of the Year was QTS, Inc, of Houston, Texas. This year there was a tie for Veteran Owned Business of the Year: Met-Con, Inc of Cocoa, Fla. and Kernco, Inc of Danvers, Mass. The Large Business of the Year was Lockheed Martin Space Systems of Littleton, Colo.

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“Just as with our employees, we also strive for diversity across our supplier base,” Herring said. “Of a supplier base of more than 2,600 businesses, we’re extremely proud that two thirds of them are small businesses, the true engine of innovation in America. So far in calendar year 2010, nearly 69 percent of our purchase orders have gone to small businesses and since our inception we have awarded more than \$2.6 billion to small businesses.”

USA’s Small Business of the Year, EMF, Inc., supports USA in both the Space Shuttle and Orion programs providing design and fabrication for critical requirements, such as the Ethylene Propylene Diene Monomer flight covers used on the solid rocket boosters. For Orion, EMF fabricates and installs Orion tooling; the Crew Module Lifting Station 3 and Structural Sling, the Crew Module Heat Shield Adjustment Fixture and the Base Dolly/Holding Structure.

The recipient of USA’s Small Disadvantaged Business Supplier of the Year was Impact Industrial Supplies, Inc. which provides consumable industrial supplies to USA. A KSC and Canaveral Air Force Station supplier since 1993, the company specializes in handling Certified Material requiring documentation for all levels of certification.

MET-CON, Inc. one of the Veteran-Owned Small Businesses of the Year, provides the main flame deflectors at the Shuttle launch pads which routinely experience damage during lift-off. Met-Con partnered with USA and introduced a much improved method of removing the old refractory material using high-pressure water driven robots, thus reducing time for performance, resulting in manual labor cost savings and increased personnel safety.

The second Veteran-Owned Small Businesses of the Year, Kernco, Inc., fabricates maintains and processes Vacuum Bottle Assemblies for the Orbiter Aft Fuselage Gas Sampling System. Their high quality Vacuum Bottle Assemblies sample the air during ascent therein providing USA the air sample data needed to analyze any ascent anomalies, such as leaks, in the Orbiter propulsion system.

A-B Computer Solutions, Inc., USA's Woman-Owned Small Business Supplier of the Year, provides innovative improvements to hardware maintenance requirements. Their solutions now save USA approximately \$250,000 per year.

QTS, Inc, the HUB Zone Business of the Year, supplies professional financial services to USA ranging from complex financial modeling to cost performance and monitoring. Their services fulfill a critical need in a period of uncertain budgets and requirements.

The Large Business of the Year was Lockheed Martin Space Systems (LMSSC) which develops and manufactures STA-54, an ablative material for on-orbit repair capability of the Space Shuttle Thermal Protection System tiles. STA-54 requires procurement as close to launch dates as possible due to its limited shelf-life. LMSSC has worked to extend the shelf life of the STA-54 ablative material from 45 days to 66 days from the manufactured date. This improvement eliminated the additional engineering and technical costs incurred in testing of the material for acceptability beyond 45 days.

United Space Alliance is a world leader in space operations with extensive experience in all aspects of the field. Headquartered in Houston, USA has employees working in Texas, Florida and Alabama. Currently, USA is applying its broad range of capabilities to NASA's Space Shuttle and International Space Station programs as well as to space operations customers in the commercial and international space industry sectors.

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