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Best of tech honored at event

MICHAEL SCHWARTZ

The Hampton Roads Technology Council celebrated the achievements of the local technology industry Thursday night at its 11th annual Tech Nite awards.

The event, held at the Virginia Air & Space Center, announced winners in seven categories, including a somewhat surprising lifetime achievement award.

HRTC honored Billie Reed, executive director of the Virginia Commercial Space Flight Authority and Virginia Space Flight Center, with the second HRTC Lifetime Achievement Award.

Reed, who had no idea he was to receive the award, is also the COO of the Mid-Atlantic Regional Spaceport at the NASA Wallops Flight Facility on Wallops Island on the Eastern Shore. He is best known for his efforts to expand the presence of Wallops Island in the rocket launch business, efforts that culminated last year with the first successful launch in more than a decade.

Three inventors were honored at Tech Nite '08 with the Excellence in Innovation Award, a category that picks the top three most innovative patents registered with the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office over the past year from inventors in Hampton Roads.

William Cumbie was recognized for his patent titled "Prevention and Treatment of Skin and Nail Infections Using Germicidal Light." The other winners were Lloyd Wolfinbarger Jr.'s "Bioreactor Mediated Recellularization of Natural and Tissue Engineered Vascular Grafts" and Gary Hodgen's "Control of Selective Estrogen Receptor Modulators."

ReRequire, a Virginia Beach-based firm that develops lien- and deed-tracking software, received the High Tech Emerging Company Award for its steady growth since being founded in 2002.

Electronic Systems, which is now owned by Xerox Corp., received the High Tech Company Award, recognizing commercial growth by an established company. Established in 1980 and based in Virginia Beach, ESI and its 500 employees provide IT solutions to businesses around the state.

Advanced Science and Automation Corp. was recognized as another up-and-comer in the local tech community by being named the Hampton Roads Technology Incubator System Client Award. The award highlights the efforts of this incubator client, which has a business plan completed, has a management team in place to carry it out and is deemed poised to generate revenue within the next year. Hampton-based Advanced Science and Automation Corp. provides virtual reality and simulation software.

Jeffrey D. Wassmer, president and CEO of Spectrum Comm Inc. in Hampton, received the High Tech Entrepreneur Award honoring the commercial growth of the company that specializes in providing a variety of IT solutions to the Department of Defense and other federal agencies.

And even though he's an accountant, Paul G. DiNardo, a shareholder in the CPA firm Wall, Einhorn & Chernitzer, received the High Tech Leadership Award for his efforts in numerous high-tech endeavors.