

San Diego Marine Biologist Is Awarded for Creating International Drone Operational Protocols to Protect Wildlife

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Alicia Amerson Founder of Alimosphere was awarded for contributions to the Trusted Operator Program at the Association for Unmanned Vehicle Systems International XPONENTIAL Conference on Tuesday, May 1, 2018 in Denver, Colorado.

[San Diego, CA] — [May 8, 2018] – Alicia Amerson Founder of Alimosphere announced today that her company was awarded for environmental stewardship contributions to the Trusted Operator Program at the Association For Unmanned Vehicle Systems International (AUVSI) XPONENTIAL conference held in Denver, Colorado from April 30 to May 4, 2018.

The Trusted Operator Program (TOP) designed by leading industry stakeholders and brand ambassadors was a response to unify the remote pilot community and standardize training protocols, best practices, and conduct offered by drone education organizations. This level of commitment by a TOP remote pilot or training organization demonstrates reliability, safety, professionalism, and trust in the unmanned aerial systems industry. The training

protocols included in the TOP, close the gaps, produce industry agreed consensus and attract many benefits, tangible dividends, and greater power to advocate for industry needs. AUVSI, is the world's largest nonprofit organization devoted exclusively to advancing the unmanned systems and robotics community. AUVSI which selected the TOP Contribution Winners, serves more than 7,500 members from government organizations, industry and academia. AUVSI is committed to fostering, developing and promoting unmanned systems and robotics technologies. AUVSI members support the defense, civil and commercial sectors.

“Alicia Amerson was an outstanding contributor to the ‘build’ of the Trusted Operator Program – TOP”, which is set to launch in September this year. TOP, is a critical initiative lead by AUVSI members and leaders in the UAS industry, TOP will unify the training competency and proficiency protocols of remote pilots in the USA and in the global market. TOP provides a benchmark for safety, professionalism, reliability and trust, and also provides guidance in focused operational areas such as Oil and Gas, Public Safety etc. “Alicia focused her experience and knowledge to pull together protocols, standards and best practice to educate remote pilots about wildlife conservation and reducing drone disturbance ,” said **Tracy Lamb, VP of Regulatory and Safety Affairs & Chief Pilot at AUVSI.**

During the conference Alicia Amerson presented a talk on how to design a wildlife disturbance reduction plan in the Trending Topics session. The conference focused heavily on disturbance and emerging drone technology and various applications. "This technology is changing many of the industries we are familiar with and at much faster integration rates than regulations can keep up." said Amerson. "This is why we need to develop robust flight planning and field protocols."

Alimosphere is a San Diego based small woman owned business focused on wildlife conservation in both the marine and terrestrial environments. The company's tagline “We stand up for what we stand on” is attributed to their dedication to bring real-world

conservation research to the everyday person. The company works with nonprofit organizations and commercial businesses to create drone flight plans that reduce wildlife disturbance and mitigate destruction of wild spaces during drone field survey and monitoring operations. As drones become more prevalent in everyday life the risk of collision with birds using the same airspace, or disturbance to shy coastal animals like harbor seals increases. Drones can also be a disturbance to humans. The small team designs online courses and hosts seminars for all age levels that are focused on preservation of biodiversity and wild spaces along with information about using drone technology for good. The company strives to inspire and educate for a lifetime of scientific curiosity, adventure, and stewardship.

“Alimosphere is honored to be recognized within the AUVSI network and Remote Pilots Council. Drones are becoming incredibly important tools for conservation research and we want to support scientists that are using this tool to protect biodiversity around the world and help other commercial pilots green their drone footprint.” said Alicia Amerson “Drones can disturb wildlife. Yet, when an image of a starving killer whale pops up on a social media newsfeed it instantly makes us question why are they starving. As humans we can instantly connect this image with our survival. Drone images are one of the most valuable aspects of connecting humans with ocean and wildlife conservation.”

Alicia Amerson and other TOP program contributors were honored at the AUVSI XPONENTIAL TOP Awards ceremony on **Tuesday May 1, 2018**, at Colorado Conference Center in Denver, Colorado, where the winners were recognized in eight different functional areas that use unmanned aerial systems as a tool for commercial applications. More information about the AUVSI Trusted Operators Program can be found at <http://www.auvsi.org/rpc-top>.

ABOUT WINNER

Alicia Amerson earned a master's degree in marine biodiversity and conservation from the [Scripps Institution of Oceanography](#) at UC San Diego in 2015. She graduated with a B.S. in biology from [Eastern New Mexico University](#) in 2002, and then in 2012 she earned her Certified Project Manager credentials and worked for the [Los Alamos National Laboratory](#) on the environmental remediation project to clean up the hazardous and radiological waste produced during the Manhattan Project Era. She is a licensed Part 107 FAA remote pilot and a member of the [Women and Drones](#) organization. Amerson worked on UAS research projects in Western Australia and South Australia with [Murdoch University](#), collecting data on large whales in reproductive areas. She studied whales and dolphins in Alaska, Washington, Oregon, and California; and internationally in Canada, Mexico, Costa Rica, and Australia. She completed a comprehensive whale-watching study along the west coast of North America to observe how operators implement guidelines and regulations for watching whales. Find more information at www.alimosphere.com or take the online class for drone stewardship at www.alimospherelearn.world. Connect directly with Alicia on [LinkedIn](#).

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Website: www.alimosphere.com

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AUVSI XPONENTIAL 2018 Conference:

The AUVSI XPONENTIAL 2018 conference was the 46th edition of the AUVSI's annual conference for the robotics and unmanned systems industry. With 8,500+ industry leaders and professionals from more than 55 countries and an XPO Hall featuring 725 cutting-edge companies. XPONENTIAL 2018 is the biggest unmanned aerial show in North America.