

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Miami Dade College Receives Significant AT&T Contribution for DronesUp Program

Miami, Oct.18, 2016 – Miami Dade College (MDC) is the recipient of a \$25,000 contribution from **AT&T** for its new program, **DronesUp**, an intensive eight-week training course that provides live flight sessions and lectures to master the art of safe drone technology and operation. Through a collaboration between **MDC's Eig-Watson School of Aviation**, the **Idea Center**, and the **MDC Foundation**, the official presentation of the donation will occur **Tuesday, Oct. 25, at 5:30 p.m.**

Confirmed speakers include: Carolina Ragolta, product manager at enterprise drone maker Kespry; and Art Pregler, director of National Mobility Systems at AT&T.

Ragolta is visiting from Silicon Valley, where she builds autonomous drones and an aerial intelligence platform for the aggregates, construction, and insurance industries. She received her engineering degree from Harvard University, where she was a NASA MUST Scholar, and is currently training for her private pilot's license.

As AT&T's UAS Program Director, Pregler is responsible for nationwide oversight and internal implementation of drones. He is also Director of National Mobility Systems, responsible for development of enterprise data systems. Prior to AT&T, he served DOD, NASA, DARPA, and other technology-focused agencies as a Command & Control Officer, Air Traffic Controller, Air Weapons Controller, and Mission Control Specialist.

The award coincides with MDC's launch of a new session of DronesUp, a combination of in-class instruction with live flight-training sessions. Students who complete the program will earn an Unmanned Aerial Systems (UAS) course completion certificate, having mastered proper flight control and hardware maintenance for safe and legal flight within U.S. airspace. Students will also develop an enhanced understanding of how drones are changing diverse industries, including agriculture, real estate, health care, and more. Drones will be provided for flight sessions.

Instructors from MDC's Eig-Watson School of Aviation provide the drone training, while the Idea Center, MDC's hub for innovation, educates students regarding the business aspects of the industry. This combination of theory and hands-on learning prepares students for careers as commercial drone pilots.

AT&T is an advocate of drone technology, and its national drone program is driving innovation and technology as it focuses on enhancing its network and developing advanced solutions for its customers. Together, **MDC and AT&T are moving toward the future by pushing the envelope on what's technologically possible for drones.**

To register or for more information about DronesUp, please visit <http://theideacenter.co/dronesup/>.

About Philanthropy & Social Innovation at AT&T

AT&T is committed to advancing education, strengthening communities and improving lives. Through its community initiatives, AT&T has a long history of investing in projects that create learning opportunities; promote academic and economic achievement; or address community needs. AT&T Aspire is AT&T's signature philanthropic initiative that drives innovation in education by bringing diverse resources to bear on the issue including funding, technology, employee volunteerism, and mentoring. Through Aspire, we've passed the \$250 million mark on our plan to invest \$350 million in education from 2008-2017.

About the Idea Center @MDC

can gather, collaborate and take advantage of resources and training to develop their entrepreneurial ideas. Through cutting-edge entrepreneurship education, professional development and experiential learning, students and community members can acquire the tools needed to identify challenges and develop solutions. The Idea Center has several components including MarketHack, CREATE accelerator, CodePro, The Startup Challenge, and the Innovation Lab, to name a few. It is made possible through the support of Knight Foundation. For more information, visit www.theideacenter.co

MDC Media-only contacts: Juan C. Mendieta, MDC director of communications, 305-237-7611, jmendiet@mdc.edu; Hesy Fernandez, director of media relations, 305-237-3949, hfernan5@mdc.edu; Sue Arrowsmith, 305-237-3710, sue.arrowsmith@mdc.edu or Allison Horton, 305-237-3359, ahorton2@mdc.edu.