



CONNECT to Honor Three Distinguished Innovators at Annual Awards

October 22, 2018

Awards celebrate leaders in San Diego innovation ecosystem

SAN DIEGO (October 22, 2017) – [CONNECT](#), the premier accelerator for innovative technology and life science companies in San Diego, announced today that it will honor three distinguished recipients with awards at their annual Most Innovative New Product Awards event in November.

CONNECT has selected Mark Dankberg, Chairman of the Board and Chief Executive Officer of Viasat, for its highest honor – induction into the CONNECT Entrepreneur Hall of Fame. Dankberg is being honored for his contribution to the global communications industry through his co-founding and leading of Viasat, based in Carlsbad.

“We are honored to induct Mark into CONNECT’s Entrepreneur Hall of Fame,” said Greg McKee, CEO of CONNECT. “The magnitude of what Mark and Viasat have already done, and are poised to do, will impact how the world communicates. Mark’s leadership as an innovator who continues to push boundaries, is vital to both San Diego county, and the broader technology landscape.”

Since Viasat’s inception in 1986, Dankberg has been considered a visionary, building a company consistently recognized for its innovation, and its commitment to culture. Dankberg is an acknowledged industry expert in communications technology, satellite, aerospace and defense, and is leading a new generation of high-capacity satellite systems that are poised to deliver worldwide broadband coverage. He has co-authored several military standards on satellite networking and holds numerous patents in communications and satellite networking technologies.

Dankberg is the seventeenth inductee into the CONNECT Entrepreneur Hall of Fame. Past inductees include Magda Marquet, François Ferré, Peter Preuss, Andrew Viterbi, Irwin Jacobs, Walter Zable, Ivor Royston, Neal Blue, Linden Blue, William Rastetter, J. Robert Beyster, Gene Ray, Howard “Ted” Greene, Ron Taylor, and Peter Farrell.

CONNECT will also honor Peter Ellsworth and Dr. Eric Topol with Duane Roth Distinguished Contribution Awards.

Topol will receive the Duane Roth DCA for Life Sciences, for his contributions to the industry and to San Diego as the Founder and Director of the Scripps Research Translational Institute (SRTI) and Executive Vice-President of Scripps Research.

As a researcher, Topol has published over 1200 peer-reviewed articles, with more than 200,000 citations, was elected to the National Academy of Medicine, and is one of the top 10 most cited researchers in medicine (Thomson Reuters ISI, “Doctor of the Decade”). In 2016, Topol was awarded a \$207M grant from the NIH to lead a significant part of the Precision Medicine (All of Us) Initiative. Prior to leading Scripps SRTI, he led the Cleveland Clinic to become the top center for heart care and was the founder of a new medical school there.

Celebrating his contributions to San Diego and the surrounding industries through the building of

Sharp Health Care, Ellsworth will receive the Duane Roth DCA for Technology. A law practitioner until 1986, Ellsworth was then recruited by Sharp Memorial Hospital to build a comprehensive health care system of hospitals and medical groups. As president, Ellsworth built Sharp Health Care from a single hospital into a medical system that is also one of the largest private employers in San Diego. Ellsworth currently serves as the president of the Legler Benbough Foundation. Since 1996, the Foundation has distributed over \$60 million dollars to various San Diego nonprofit enterprises to benefit the residents of San Diego.

A dinner honoring Dankberg, Ellsworth, and Topol will be held on November 29, 2018 in conjunction with CONNECT's 31st Most Innovative New Product Awards at the Hyatt Regency La Jolla at Aventine. In addition to recognizing these outstanding individuals, CONNECT will also be honoring innovation and groundbreaking new products. For more information, or to purchase tickets, please visit <http://www.connect.org/events/2018-most-innovative-new-product-awards>

For more information about CONNECT, please visit www.connect.org/.

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ABOUT CONNECT

CONNECT is a premier innovation company accelerator in San Diego that creates and scales great companies in the technology and life sciences sectors. By creating an environment in which entrepreneurs and C-suite executives have access to the people, capital, and technology resources they need for success, CONNECT has assisted in the formation and development of more than 3,000 companies since 1985. Widely regarded as one of the world's most successful organizations linking entrepreneurs and C-suite executives with the resources they need for the commercialization of innovative products and services; our program has been modeled in more than 50 regions around the world.