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SMTA “Members of Distinction” Awards Announced

Minneapolis, MN - The SMTA is proud to honor the 2024 “Members of Distinction” award recipients who have shown exceptional dedication to the association and the electronics manufacturing industry.

The association's highest honor, the Founder's Award, recognizes members who have made exceptional contributions to the industry, as well as support and service to the SMTA. This year, the organization selected **Pradeep Lall, Ph.D.**, Auburn University, to receive this prestigious award. Dr. Lall's involvement in the SMTA spans almost 30 years taking on various technical and leadership roles including as an author or co-author of over 70 papers published by SMTA, technical committee member for several conferences, and founding faculty advisor of the SMTA Auburn University student chapter. Pradeep has mentored and encouraged student participation through the Auburn Chapter, and has been an advocate in efforts to broaden the global reach of SMTA publications and increase the technical quality of research presented.

The Member of Technical Distinction Award recognizes individuals who have made significant and continuing technical contributions to the association. This year the Awards Committee selected **Tony Lentz**, FCT Assembly, as the recipient of this award. For over a decade, Tony has presented dozens of technical papers at SMTA conferences and chapter meetings and also contributed his time and expertise to several training course task forces.

The Excellence in Leadership Award honors strong leaders who continue to support and elevate the association. This year the award goes to both **Rob Rowland**, Axiom Electronics, and **Sal Sparacino**, ZESTRON Corporation.

- Rob Rowland joined SMTA in 1990 and has held leadership roles as SMTA conference chair for 20 years and more recently as vice president of the SMTA Oregon Chapter. His efforts helped make SMTA International the important technical conference it is today and he has been a major support for activities in the Oregon chapter since the pandemic.
- Sal Sparacino has been involved in various committees since joining SMTA as a member in 2011. He served on the board of directors in the roles of VP Communications and VP Expos over his two terms. Sal continues his involvement as VP of Membership in the SMTA Capital Chapter. His efforts range from leading marketing campaigns to facilitating collaboration across industry regions and sectors. His passion for SMTA's mission continues to have an impact.

The Excellence in International Leadership Award recognizes members who have provided outstanding support and leadership to the SMTA's international members, chapters, or educational programs. The recipient selected for this award is **Sutharshan Suppiramaniam**. Sutharshan joined SMTA in 2010 and has served as an officer of the Ontario Chapter since 2017, president since 2019. Through his leadership the chapter addressed the challenge of connecting members not only across the greater Toronto area, but even across Canada and the globe by hosting regular webinars as well as their first expo in years.

KYZEN Corporation received the SMTA+ Corporate Partnership Award this year. As a Corporate Gold member, KYZEN has shown support at every level of the association from supporting global and chapter leadership positions to technical contributions for conferences and committees, and as an exhibitor at almost every expo throughout the year. They embody the SMTA mission by encouraging employees to become members, attend meetings and share their knowledge. KYZEN Corporation is most deserving of this honor.

SMTA has recognized exceptional individual and corporate members for their immeasurable contributions to the association since 1994.

View details at the website: <https://smta.org/page/current-recipients>

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SMTA – A Global Association Working at a Local Level

SMTA is an international network of professionals who build skills, share practical experience and develop solutions in Electronics Manufacturing (EM), including microsystems, emerging technologies, and related business operations.

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