

## **VoltAir CEO Julius Davis Receives AMAC Small Business Partner Catalyst Award**

AMAC Catalyst Award honoree Julius Davis is President and CEO at VoltAir Consulting Engineers. Davis recently received the Small Business Partner Award, which recognizes a business owner who has demonstrated support for AMAC's mission and goals and has had a significant impact on their community and the workforce.

"VoltAir, a Tampa-St. Petersburg-based business with an extraordinary track record of growth and development in the aviation industry, fits our award description to a tee," said Krystal Brumfield, President and CEO of AMAC. "Davis has been an active partner with us for years, as a provider of energy and support on a variety of committees. In his community he also has been a leader, serving on non-profit boards and offering valuable time and insights."

Started in the midst of our national recession in 2006, Davis' 11 year old firm now employs more than 42 engineers with offices in Orlando, Houston, Nashville, and Atlanta as well as Tampa.

"I got involved with AMAC when I first started my business," Davis said. "At my first AMAC conference I was immediately impressed by the numbers of like-minded business owners in attendance who generously shared information about their challenges and solutions."

"I knew that this was an organization that I wanted to be a part of," he continued. "And, I'm not the sort who just shows up and enjoys the benefits. I've been an exhibitor, a foundation supporter and served on the Legislative Affairs committee, among others."

He said that the access to aviation industry decision makers through AMAC involvement was significant. "It certainly contributed to the growth of my business."

For Davis, a Tampa native who comes from a family of entrepreneurs, business ownership was an early goal. But first, he said, he wanted to prepare a solid base of education, information and potential clients.

"Having all your ducks 'beak to tail' contributes substantially to a smooth transition from business employee to employer," he said.

He received his Bachelor of Science degree in Electrical Engineering from the University of South Florida in 1993, and then joined a multi-national engineering firm, to get experience in the field.

"Two years before I went out on my own I started night classes at the local federal Small Business Development Center, he recalls. "I took just about every class they offered."

He read copiously articles and books on business taxes, planning and start-up strategy and sought advice and insights from business owners and mentors. "My colleagues and clients at my former employer were all aware of my ambitions to have my own business. They helped and encouraged me," he said.

In the meantime he focused on doing stellar work on the job. As he advanced in responsibility within the corporation he gained a positive reputation for strategic project management and good outcomes within the construction and aviation industry.

Once he started his business and began managing its rapid growth, he realized that he needed more sophisticated training. He returned to his alma mater and earned a Master's degree in Business Administration in 2014.

"The hard part of running a business is letting go of complete and day to day control of every project and trusting the excellent engineers that you employ to handle projects in their own way," he said. "But once you reach the point where you can, the rewards are great."

"You get satisfaction from seeing client appreciation, from being an employer, and from being a leader in your community where you can have an impact on decisions made for economic growth and development," he said.

And, he adds, "It's great to get awards from organizations you respect, like AMAC."