



PANKL

ctpost.com

[Traffic](#) [Weather](#)

Search ctpost.com Web Search by **YAHOO!** Businesses

[Home](#) [News](#) [Sports](#) [Business](#) [Entertainment](#) [Obituaries](#) [Opinion](#) [Blogs](#) [Shopping](#) [Classified](#)

[Local](#) [Police Reports](#) [Regional](#) [Valley](#) [National](#) [World](#) [Politics](#) [Science and Technology](#)

With Hollywood style, California firm lands Sikorsky challenge

Rob Varnon

Published 9:02 p.m., Thursday, July 12, 2012

0 0 0
Tweet **Gefällt** **Share**

Comments (0) Email This

Larger | Smaller Font

[Printable Version](#)

OTHER NEWS



A California-based company that applied Hollywood special effects to create high tech camouflage for helicopters has won the first Sikorsky Innovation Entrepreneurial Challenge and will open an office in the [Stamford Innovation Center](#).

Pankl Aerospace, of Cerritos, Calif., was the winner of the challenge the Stratford-based helicopter maker launched in February. The contest challenged entrants to find solutions to five questions and submit their ideas for review by Sikorsky, which pledged to help them further the idea and possibly invest in it.

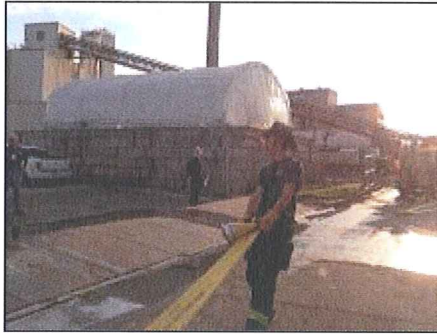
"We're very excited," said [Sonya Zierhut](#), chief executive officer of Pankl Aerospace and its spinoff, [Pankl Aerospace Innovations](#), which won the prize.

Pankl has a long-standing relationship with Sikorsky and provides components for the Black Hawk program.

Zierhut said her company started an innovation team last year and developed a suite of products for helicopters, including active camouflage.

She said it was inspired by Hollywood special effects, but it takes those effects into the real world. The basic concept is to coat the outside of a helicopter fuselage

First day of school at Achievement First



Fire breaks out at Bridgeport construction company



OSHA finds safety violations in worker's death

with light-emitting diode screens and use a camera feed to project the image of the surrounding area onto the aircraft.

Pankl is also developing a new bionically inspired rotor blade that was inspired by the fins of the humpback whale. The blades so far show an ability to provide higher lift at higher angles of attack, she said.

"We will be taking up residency in the (Stamford) Center with two people working out of there," she said.

Sikorsky unveiled the challenge at the opening of the center and pledged to pay for incubator space at the Stamford Center in the old Town Hall.

[Marianne Heffernan](#), a Sikorsky spokesman, said Pankl could be in Stamford in the fall and working with Sikorsky experts on the technology.

While Pankl was the primary winner, Sikorsky said the quality of the field of entrants was so high it elected to award two others with further education and mentoring.

[Smart Rotor Systems](#) Inc., of Ottawa, Canada, offered a new pitch-link control technology that could help

reduce rotor noise and vibrations, while [Drew Lambert](#), an individual inventor, created a mobile network weather information concept to address localized weather information needs of the aviation community.

"Good ideas must be cultivated and allowed to grow," said Sikorsky Innovations' Director of Business Development and Technology Laurence Vigeant-Langlois, in a news release. "We are thrilled to work with these innovators who are beginning their entrepreneurial journeys."

Sikorsky's entrepreneurial program aims at extending the company's reach for new innovation beyond just its own business, thereby providing it a pipeline of innovation and potential suppliers. It is open to companies with less than \$5 million in revenues, including newly formed and pre-revenue ventures.

The company will launch the next Entrepreneurial Challenge later this month.

[Printable Version](#)
[Email This](#)
[Gefällt](#)
[Tweet](#) < 0
 [0](#)
[Share](#)

We Recommend